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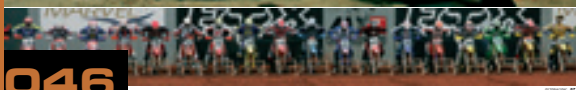
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COMMENT

LET'S KICK off this month on the subject of trials and, more specifically, the British round of the WTC that took place at Hawkstone Park at the end of July. Over the weekend more than 8,000 fans turned up at the venue that's much better known for its awesome MX circuit than its sections – but wander outside the confines of the track and it's trials heaven with gravity-defying climbs, vertical steps and evil, gripless tree roots.

From my trials riding days I know that many of the feet-up fraternity are also big into motocross – there's usually a good turn-out of my old balancing buddies from Yorkshire and Cumbria (eh!) at the annual Hawkstone International at the start of the season. But for some reason this doesn't work both ways and I've always got the impression that most motocrossers couldn't give a damn about trials and don't actually have much respect for the sport or its riders.

Okay, so there's no excuse for lycra one-piece suits outside of back street basement fetish clubs (so Sully says anyway) – and if Ellgren was good enough for Eddy Lejeune then its good enough for everyone else – but get away from the spray-on spandex for a moment and just look at what the WTC brigade can do.

Some of the sections at Hawkstone were downright terrifying with steps big enough to make free-climbers soil themselves – all tackled with maximum commitment and zero run-up. Of course, it takes guts to nail a rhythm section pinned or hit a big tabletop WFO but top trials riders need super-sized furry fellas too (something all too obvious given the lycra attire) and deserve the full respect of anyone who rides off-road.

And it's also a sport we're rather bloody good at n'all. Dougie Lampkin beat Stefan Everts into world title double figures back in '01 and although he may no longer be at the peak of his powers there's life in the old Doug (sorry!) yet – and plenty of talented Brits are waiting to step into his boots when he retires. Michael Brown, Alex Wigg and Sam Haslam did the business at Hawkstone in the supporting Junior and Youth divisions and James Dabill's putting the wind up some of the established aces in his first full WTC season.

I actually owe Dougie a bit of an apology this month having accused him of throwing a 'hissy fit' in our report from Hawkstone (check out the report starting on P98 this month and the gallery at www.dirtbikerider.com). Victory at Hawkstone would have given the Yorkshireman his 100th WTC win and he wasn't in any mood to hang around and chat after coming home fourth. Dougie hates to lose and was gutted he didn't hit the ton on home turf – if he'd been happy to hang around and chat to Jack Burnicle he wouldn't have the drive and determination needed to be a 12-time world champ. Simple as that!

Okay, time for some controversy now... The MXdN is coming up quickly (September 23/24 if you don't already know) and it appears there's a bit of dithering with the British squad. 'Rob Herring is pleased to announce details of the riders who MAY form the Team GB line-up' says the press release from ACU HQ. May? Get off the bloody fence and pick the bloody team. The four riders in with a shout are Billy MacKenzie, Carl Nunn, James Noble and Tommy Searle – so that's four riders who don't know whether they're in or out and face an anxious wait, probably right up until the August 30 deadline.

In my mind it's dead simple and the team we need to choose can be summed up in five words – Billy Mac, Nunny, Tommy Gun! No disrespect to James – he's got more MX talent in his pinkie than I've got in my whole body and can be relied on to post a solid, dependable score. And as our #1 MX1 pilot he's also an easy (ie safe) choice to make – but balls to playing safe, balls to being timid with team selection and balls to worrying what other people think!

Come on Rob – you didn't know how to ride conservatively so don't pick your team that way. Live dangerously. How exciting at our home MXdN with masses of home support would it be to have Nunny and Billy going mental on 450s and Tommy giving it beans on a 250F? We haven't really got a cat in hell's chance of winning so why bother about settling for a respectable finish? Take a gamble, pick the three most exciting riders in the country and let's take it to the Yanks – even if it only lasts for five furious laps it'll be worth it! And if it lasts for longer you just never know what could happen...

PS Congratulations to Matt and Louise Bates on the birth of their son, Finlay. You won't know what hit you big-nose!

Sean



Billy Mac and Tommy Searle are both on the move for 2007

FULL SWING!

Bed-hopping Brits trade teams for 2007 season...

IT'S ALL going on in the transfer market at the moment with a number of big name moves confirmed as teams chop and change their line-ups ready for the '07 season.

The big news is that Tommy Searle, without a doubt one of the biggest sensations on the world scene, is leaving his Molson Kawasaki team and switching to the KTM factory MX2 squad.

The 17-year-old British championship pace-setter, currently seventh in the MX2 world championship, has had two GP podium finishes in his first full season of world championship action – making him very hot property on the motocross market.

Pit Beirer, KTM's head of motorsport, knows a potential world champion when he sees one. "Tommy's performances this season rightly opened a lot of doors for him and we knew from watching his riding and rate of progression that he would be a good member for our MX2 team.

"We are excited to see what he is capable of with our factory bikes and we are sure that he will keep up the decent run of results that we have enjoyed in the category since the start of the millennium."

And Tommy Gun's also glad to be aboard. "I'm happy to have signed with KTM. You can see from their record of wins and championships that their factory team is one of the best. I'm looking forward to working with them."

With Tommy leaving Molson a vacancy on the team has become available and, in a spot of motocross bed-hopping, factory Kawasaki MX1 rider Stephen Sword will join Gareth Swanepoel who stays put for '07.

"All my confidence and achievements have been in MX2," says Sword who's still recovering from a badly broken foot. "I know I have the speed and if I can get myself up to 100 per cent and prepare myself well then I can win. I will have good people around to push me in that direction.

"I believe they have all the attributes to be able to win a world championship – Tommy has given them two podiums this season and I hope I can deliver more."

Team manager Lisa Church is happy to welcome the Scot back to the team he started his pro career with. "We are thrilled to have signed Sword because we know that we are working with one of the fastest British riders with a very good record of results."

So, the big question now is who will replace Sword in the factory Kawasaki MX1 team? Surely not another British hotshot? Is our MX scene really that incestuous? Well last month we linked him to a ride in the CAS Honda squad to replace Josh Coppins who's signed for Rinaldi Yamaha so, what the hell, let's throw Billy MacKenzie's name into the mix as well!

The DBR columnist refused to comment when we put the hot gossip to him, his current boss Steve Dixon wouldn't return our calls and Kawasaki big wig Steve Guttridge was more polite – but equally tight lipped – when we got him on the blower!

And then, as we were slumped over our hot keyboards on the eve of deadline day, the phone rang and roused us from our slumbers. It was Steve Dixon on the line!

"Yes, I can confirm that Billy is leaving to go to Kawasaki," says Steve. "It's a step up to a full factory team and he had to take it – we've had eight good years and been loyal to each other. There are no hard feelings."

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WIN! WIN! WIN! WIN! WIN!

Join Red Bull X-Fighters in Madrid

ON SEPTEMBER 14 Europe's largest bullfighting arena – Plaza de Toros de Las Ventas in Madrid – will play host to the Red Bull X-Fighters, the most spectacular freestyle motocross event in the world.

And to celebrate we've teamed up with Red Bull to reward the UK's top six MX rookies with a trip to the event and the chance to meet FMX legends including Travis Pastrana and Nate Adams.

A rider coaching and selection day will be held on August 23 at Cusses Gorse, Salisbury. Development sessions will be run by some of the country's most experienced riders who will assess

the rookies before a final competition is held in the afternoon and the six winners selected.

We're looking for the best all-round riders and we'll be expecting talent, passion and – just as important – a great attitude.

If you think you've got what it takes send an email to xfighters@uk.redbull.com by August 17. Make sure you include your name, age, address, phone number, years riding and no more than 100 words telling us why you think you could be the next MX Rookie and why you should go to Red Bull X-Fighters.

The top 30 applicants will score a spot at the MX Rookie Search day at Cusses Gorse.

Sounds too good to be true? Well there are a few conditions of entry!

- 1) You must be under 16
- 2) You must hold a current, valid UK passport
- 3) You must be currently competing in either the BYMX or BSMA National series
- 4) You must be able to attend the MX Rookie Search day on August 23
- 5) You must be able to fly to Madrid on September 14 and return on September 15
- 6) The judges' decision is final

Successful applicants will be advised by close of play on August 18.

For more info about X-Fighters go to www.redbullxfighters.com and for more info on the MX Rookie Search fire off an email to xfighters@uk.redbull.com



WE HAVE A WINNER! WIN! WIN!

New home for Carl Nunn replica 250SX-F

AFTER THREE months, 2500 entries and a whole heap of paper cuts (ain't they painful little blighters?) from opening all those envelopes we finally have a winner of our KTM 250SX-F decked out in Carl Nunn EA DBS Factory Graphics.

Nunny – who also donated a set of his soiled Fox riding kit from the Brit champs meeting at Matchams and a pair of Spy goggles – drew the winning entry at the Skelder Bank round of the British championship.

The bad news (for a publication based in Lancashire) is that the winner lives the wrong side of the border in Yorkshire, the good news is he already races a two-fiddy thumper and will put his prize to good use.

For security purposes we'll only identify him as Mr W but we'll provide photographic evidence of the handover in next month's DBR once a suitable time and venue has been arranged!

"That's brilliant," said the mysterious Mr W when he took the call from DBR. "Lancashire's a much nicer place than Yorkshire – can I come and collect it from you?"

Thanks to everyone who took the time to enter – just so you know the correct answers were

C) Tyla Rattray, B) Carl Nunn and A) Ben Townley.



Supercross: The Movie DVD



SOMETIMES TO be really good at something you need the full support of your friends, family, fans and that straight-faced cyborg from Terminator 2 – Robert Patrick. And that's what KC Carlyle is lucky enough to have in the blockbuster Supercross: The Movie.

To celebrate the UK release we've hooked up with those pretty PR people at Momentum Pictures to offer you the chance to win one of five copies of 2005's finest motocross movie.

To win the DVD just answer this relatively simple question. In Supercross: The Movie what team do KC Carlyle and Rowdy Sparks ride for? Is it:

- A) Team DBR B) Team Nami
C) Team Win D) Team America: World Police

If you think you know the answer write it down real quickly on the back of a postcard or sealed envelope without letting anyone copy you while laughing like a maniac.

Then write your own name and address along with a daytime telephone number next to the answer before sending it all to 'Col's a Potty Mouth!', DBR Magazine, 12 Victoria Street, Morecambe LA4 4AG. The first five correct answers drawn at random will win the prizes.

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**Cover: Tommy Searle
invades the airspace
above Whitby
International Airport...
(Sutty)
Contents main image:
...while down below
Carl Nunn tears up the
Skelder Bank track
(Sutty)**

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MXdN MAGIC

It's just over a month until the event of the year comes to Matterley Basin

IT'S NOT long now until the Motocross des Nations visits Matterley Basin and it's all systems go for the September 23/24 event. This race is being billed as the final battle between two of the greatest racers in the history of motocross – Ricky Carmichael and Stefan Everts – as well as the more obvious clash of the countries the Nations is renowned to be.

The 60th edition of the inter-country team race promises to be an absolute epic and an event no one with a pulse should miss. Bike-it, the event promoters, should have learned one or two lessons from their mid-season round of the world championship and are hoping to serve up something oh-so very special this time around.

Generally regarded to be the Olympics of motocross, the MXdN should deliver a battle royale between the world's finest right here on British soil. While Everts and Carmichael will both be looking to sign off their careers in fine style you can guarantee Stewart and the other contenders will be showing no respect.

The revised Matterley Basin track should be even more technical and spectacular for the Nations while the paying public will find new parking and camping helps make things so much better. All-in-all this is going to be one of the biggest weekends in the history of British motocross so make sure you're a part of it. Call the event hotline on **0845 456 6536** or visit the official website www.mxofnations.com to book tickets or get additional information.



WHERE'S SUTTY?

WITH HIS ill-starred Romaniacs adventure looming and a whole lotta training to do, Sutty went AWOL at the Hawkstone WTC trial. His last words were "screw men in lycra, gonna pound me out some laps of the track dude" before chugging back a Party 7-sized can of SuttDawg and sprinting down the start straight. We thought he was taking his fitness regime seriously but the Dirty Dawg was up to his old tricks!

GORDON CROCKARD

TREASURE HUNT!

GORDY HEADS NORTH, SOUTH, EAST AND WEST IN HIS SEARCH FOR GOLD THIS MONTH AND COMES OUT OF IT ALL WITH A COUPLE MORE POTS IN HIS POSSESSION!

WORDS BY GORDON CROCKARD PHOTO BY SUTTY

HI AGAIN, another busy few weeks have passed by and my monthly DBR report has me reflecting on how the results have been going. In general it's been very positive and my form is coming back little by little. I would like to be finishing higher than I have been as I'm an ambitious person and I hate to get beat by anyone regardless of whatever circumstances I may be dealing with at the time.

Still no wins at a British championship and still no podium at a grand prix. Those are my goals and I genuinely believe in my heart that I can achieve them before the 2006 season ends. I may be proven wrong about that but the only way I will find out is if I believe it's possible and persist each day to contribute my energy and time into activities which benefit my motocross rider package.

My schedule has taken me all over the place this month and it's been good fun I must admit. In early July I raced an Ulster championship round at Tandragee. John Sinton and his team of workers set a high standard for other clubs to follow.

Unfortunately it started to rain around lunchtime which took the summer spring out of everyone's step. I won two of the three races after falling off twice and coming through to fourth at the flag in the other. I really enjoyed it and thanks to the club for helping me get to the airport on time straight after the race.

Amy and I flew over to Birmingham that night and my friends who'd driven the camper over with my spare bike in the back picked us up for the drive down to Foxhill. It rained all night and I worried that I'd have another mud race to contend with after slipping and sliding around the muddy circuit in Ireland.

Once out on the track I was really impressed with the condition of the ground – if it hadn't have rained all night I think there might have been a dust problem! The race was one of the Wulfsport British Masters rounds and they attract good riders to the series (thanks for noticing my skills dude – Sutty) along with good prize money.

I set pole in qualifying and then holeshot and won the first race. Next race didn't go so great as there was a little confusion at the start and I was quite far behind to then catch up to finish third. I ended the day second overall and in one piece so it wasn't a bad day to be fair.

A couple of days later and I was off to Rhayader for the final round of the evening MX series. I was hoping to win and you can imagine how pleased I was when my bike dropped a valve and ruined my evening and any chance of winning the championship. So no trophy, no prize money and no title – perhaps I'll have better luck next year!

I flew to South Africa the next day feeling quite well travelled but very excited about being

there as this was the first time I had visited the country. I had seen the track on television and it looked good to watch but I wasn't sure how it would feel to ride.

Initially the track was fun and I was really enjoying it but when it came to the racing it was a very different story. Passing was difficult and I found myself getting very frustrated and starting to panic about my lack of forward momentum which resulted in me riding desperately meaning I eventually crashed. That was the first race ruined and I'm glad there was a second race because I went much better and finished 11th.

My next race was Whitby and the weather was red hot! The club put a lot of work and effort into preparing the track and I think they were rewarded with some great racing. There were some heavy storms in the area on Saturday night so I think the club decided not to water the track too much as it could have easily become a mess.

My results on the day were good with fourth and second but I was disappointed that I didn't win. In the first one some back-marker trouble resulted in me being punted off the track and feeling furious at how I'd lost the moto. In the second race I lost the use of my back brake and had a problem with my race pants coming down around my knees. I was worried I was going to get black flagged for indecent exposure. Thankfully I didn't and I stood on the podium in third place overall at the end of the day.

Loket was next for the Czech GP and my goal was for top five in each race. A good start was required and I failed to produce that in the first moto. The gate I had prepared was stolen then I was swallowed up in the first turn nonsense. To make matters worse the tear-off post was smashed from my goggles and I lost all of them – I couldn't see where I was going and I eventually fell off so 20th was not the result I wanted!

Heat two I came around the first lap in 12th and was able to get to seventh at the finish. I was much happier with that but still not over the moon with how the weekend went in general.

See ya soon!





Results

Championship class – Day 1

| | | | |
|----|----------------|-------------|---------|
| 1 | David Knight | (KTM) | 1530.48 |
| 2 | Euan McConnell | (TM) | 1555.65 |
| 3 | Paul Edmondson | (Honda) | 1557.42 |
| 4 | Jake Stapleton | (TM) | 1585.41 |
| 5 | Juan Knight | (Gas Gas) | 1634.44 |
| 6 | Tom Sagar | (Honda) | 1643.91 |
| 7 | Si Wakely | (Honda) | 1680.81 |
| 8 | Daryl Bolter | (Husqvarna) | 1689.63 |
| 9 | Richard Hay | (KTM) | 1695.89 |
| 10 | Rowan Jones | (Yamaha) | 1729.61 |

Championship class – Day 2

| | | | |
|----|----------------|-------------|----------|
| 1 | David Knight | (KTM) | 1291.54; |
| 2 | Paul Edmondson | (Honda) | 1344.62; |
| 3 | Jake Stapleton | (TM) | 1373.95; |
| 4 | Si Wakely | (Honda) | 1401.23; |
| 5 | Tom Sagar | (Honda) | 1402.71; |
| 6 | Daryl Bolter | (Husqvarna) | 1406.05; |
| 7 | Greg Evans | (KTM) | 1413.52; |
| 8 | Rob Jones | (Yamaha) | 1424.48; |
| 9 | Darren Wheeler | (Yamaha) | 1431.53; |
| 10 | Juan Knight | (Gas Gas) | 1434.56 |

WELSH WAILS!

It's a new event but the same winner at round three of the '06 BEC as Knighter tops the championship class...again!

Words and photo by Jonty Edmunds

ENDURO 3 world champion David Knight returns to competition on British shores at the Dyfed Dirt Bike Club run Tywi Enduro in west Wales and does exactly what everyone expects him to do – top the event on both days to remain unbeaten in the '06 BEC series.

With the event included in the British Enduro Championship for the first time ever the efforts of the DDBC and their co-hosts the Aberystwyth MCC don't go unnoticed as a largely new course, two great special tests and numerous challenging tight checks make for a cracking event.

Despite drier than expected conditions during the lead-up to the event, traditional Welsh weather returns during the first day and makes for one hell of a slippery enduro.

But for many sliding around the special tests is the least of their worries as only a handful of riders in each class remain on time and without penalties – the going is that tough!

The surprise of day one is the speed of TM-mounted Euan McConnell. Having not had the best of luck in recent WEC events the tall Scot pushes Knighter harder than any other rider and manages to beat him on one test, much to the delight of his TM team.

But despite not winning by the huge margins he has been winning by in WEC events Knighter still wins and takes the overall victory on day one by 25 seconds. With McConnell finishing as overall runner-up he places at the top of the Enduro 2 class and ahead of reigning British Enduro Champion Paul Edmondson.

"It's been a great day for me," beams McConnell. "Paul was giving me some stick before the event about my results in Canada and the States so it was nice when he came over and congratulated me after beating him."

With Knight and McConnell claiming E3 and E2 top honours Richard Hay tops the Enduro 1 class

aboard his 125cc KTM by virtue of being the only class rider to receive no time penalties.

With conditions drier, check times eased and the special tests rougher Knighter extends his day one winning margin to just over 50 seconds and remains unbeaten on all tests.

"It was hard being one of the first riders on the slippery tests yesterday, especially having as much power as I have," explains Knighter. "Day two was great, really enjoyable. I was able to attack much more than I could on day one and everything went well."

While all is good for Knighter it certainly isn't for McConnell as the star of day one fails to finish due to an intermittent ignition glitch. With McConnell out Paul Edmondson moves to the top spot in the E2 class ahead of Jake Stapleton and Si Wakely.

In the E1 class Welshman Greg Evans finishes ahead of Rob Jones and Darren Wheeler aboard his 250cc four-stroke KTM.

WEB WONDER!

THERE'S GOOD news for all you web worms out there as DBR's website – www.dirtbikerider.com – has had a bit of a revamp to make it one of the most informative and entertaining portals for off-road sport on the webby whatsit. As well as screenfuls of the latest off-road news from around the globe you will find photo galleries, games, buyer's guides, features and more just by clicking on DBR dot com – go on, 'ave a butcher's!

FMX FRENZY!

ROUND TWO of the UKFMX Masters of Freestyle Motocross series sees a handful of Britain's brightest FMX stars going head to head for the title of King of Freestyle. Over 3000 noisy fans enjoy this fund-raising event at Margam Park on one of the hottest days in Welsh history.

First up are the three new riders Ryan Pasch, Chris Haynes and Neil Kirby in the amateur comp. Ryan puts down the run of his life to take first spot followed closely by fellow FMX virgin Chris Haynes. Chris even surprises some the pro riders with his no footed whips.

In the Pro ranks no-one can get near glamour-boy Gary Taylor who pushes the limit, pulling out huge back-flips to finish ahead of Jamie Squibb, Chris Birch and Dave Wiggins.

The final round of the Skin Industries-supported series takes place at Margam Park again on September 13 starting at 7pm. For more info on the series and its riders check out www.myspace.com/ukfmfx.

Results

Pro Class

- 1 Gary Taylor (KTM)
- 2 Jamie Squibb (Kawasaki)
- 3 Chris Birch (Honda)

Amateur Class

- 1 Ryan Pasch (Honda)
- 2 Chris Haynes (Honda)
- 3 Neil Kirby (Yamaha)

Gary Taylor wins at Margam Park



©Ray Chuss



BACK TO THE FUTURE!

THERE'S A STRANGE SMELL OF DEJA VU IN THE AIR THIS MONTH AS STEVIE WONDER GOES BACK TO HIS ROOTS

WORDS BY STEPHEN SWORD PHOTO RAYARCHER.COM

I'VE GOTTA say that this month has been pretty positive and easily the best one since my accident! The last few months have been hard on me both physically and mentally so it's good to be much more mobile and almost pain free. I'm still not walking yet but I can drive my car and get myself to the gym every day. It kinda all starts here for me now, getting healthy and slowly building my fitness back up. I'm also able to swim again now that my infection's healed up which is a big help.

Although I'm not at the races and out of the limelight I still study who's looking good and who's looking bad and listening to all the gossip about who's going where – all of which brings me nicely on to what I want to talk about next.

Most of you will know by now that I'm switching teams and classes for next season. Yep, '07 will see me back in MX2 on a Molson Kawasaki. Some of you may be wondering why I'm dropping back down to MX2 and the reason's pretty simple – I think it's the best thing for me at this moment in time. It doesn't matter what class I'm in or what team I'll ride for, I'll always give 100 per cent and want to win so badly. And Kawasaki were very keen to keep me so everything should slot into place very well with Molson.

I started off my adult career with the team back in 1997 and had three successful years there. The team has grown over the years to be one of the very best in the GP paddock – they're a very hard-working, passionate bunch and highly-motivated to win a world championship. I'm also hard-working, passionate and highly-motivated to win a world championship and I know they can give me everything I need to do so.

I'll be contesting the British championship again which is something I really enjoy and good for my sponsors as well. On the subject of sponsors (smooth Swordy, smooth – SL) I'm in the process of sorting out my clothing, helmet and boots deals and should have everything sorted within the next few weeks. My goggle deal is done and dusted and I'll be staying with

Oakley for another year – this makes it seven on the trot.

It feels good that all this is happening and it motivates and excites me for next season but the thing that motivates me most is NOT seeing myself winning in the results or on the TV. It's strange not being there and I miss the feeling of flying or driving home on a Sunday evening knowing I've kicked everyone's ass. It just doesn't get better than that.

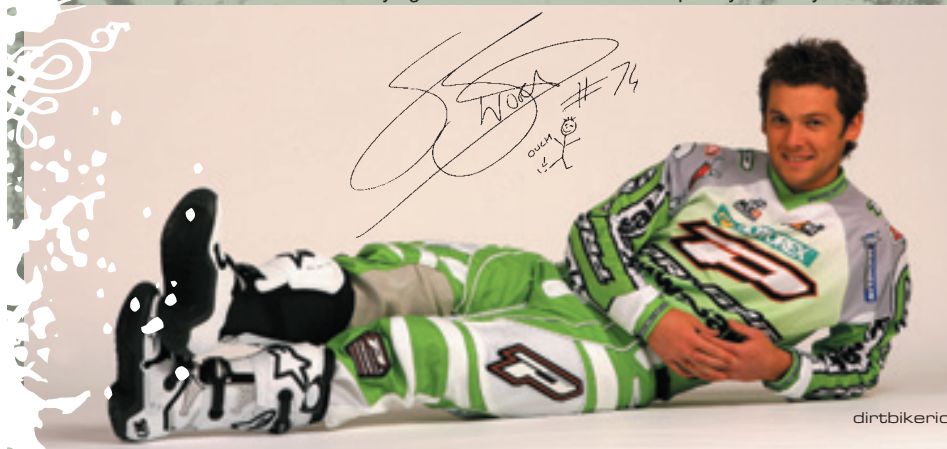
I haven't been able to get to a race to watch yet but plan to go to Namur or Desertmartin. There are a lot of people I haven't seen for a while so it would be good to catch up and, of course, smell some motocross fumes again!

Lately I've been reading books on healthy diets. I've never been one to eat junk food but feel my diet could be a big help in recuperation and making me stronger and fitter. I've had no choice but to eat healthy over the past few months just to get my general health back and make my immune system stronger so there's been a lot of fish on the Swordy plate. I've watched a few of those daytime cooking programmes and even tried a few things out – I fancy myself as a bit of a chef, I enjoy cooking and haven't poisoned anyone yet.

I was at Jodie's sister's wedding a couple of weeks ago – the first one I've been to since I was about four. I never seem to get the chance because I'm always away racing at the weekend. It was a great couple of days and the weather was excellent for wedding photos although I made a bit of a fool of myself when I forgot my tie – luckily for me someone had a spare. The next wedding will be Huck's in December although that will only happen if he survives his stag night. Watch your back Huck!

Oh, and before I forget, where's my trials bike Huck? Better still, where's my money for it? It's a good job I'm on crutches or I'd chase you down! Only joking mate, you can keep it for now – you need the practice...

Well guys, that's another month over and another month closer to getting back on a bike – take care and hopefully I'll see you all soon...





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Plus... Irish MX GP, MX des Nations preview, world motocross, trials and enduro wraps, all the usual columns and a bunch of other stuff we haven't thought of yet...

ON SALE **SEPTEMBER 15**

Buck Wild!

God only knows what was going through the Crock Star's mind as he got this Whitby rhythm section oh-so wrong but you can pretty much guarantee what was flowing through his pants! Amazingly, the Wulfsport Honda star held on by the skin of his butt cheeks and went on to finish a fine fourth after being punted from the track by battling back-markers later in the race. Even more amazingly, the stains came out after just one hot wash!







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BLARNEY

WORDS BY STEVIE MILLS PHOTO BY JOE BEATTIE

BOILING POINT!

THE GRAND PRIX OF NORTHERN IRELAND IS COMING UP, THE BYMX BOYS HAVE BEEN AND GONE AND A DRIED GRAPE IS LEADING ALL FOUR DOMESTIC CHAMPIONSHIPS!

THE SEASON is pretty much at boiling point! Last year we had four different champions in the Ulster and Irish MX1 and MX2 classes, this time around one rider has his hands on all four titles!

The 'Iron Man' of Irish motocross – that's Moto-One/Intouch team leader Phil McCullough – is the currant (what, he's a dried grape? – SL) points leader in all the national championships at this time.

Sure, anything can still happen – after all it's MX we're talking about – but McCullough has been in devastating form lately, especially at the Irish championship rounds when he and fellow team-mate Wayne Garrett race six motos per day.

Brian Steele has been noticeably absent from the startgate, the currant (what, he's a dried grape? – SL) Irish MX2 champ contracted a mystery virus and has been unable to train or ride his Watt Kawasaki over the past couple of months. We wish Brian a speedy recovery and hope to see the smoothest rider in Ireland back trackside before long.

Now let's have a look at how all the boys are doing blazing the British championship trail...

The Crock Star is striving to get back to top form – his second place moto finish at Whitby will have been another stepping stone for the Wulfsport Honda rider. Whitby had more surprises for the Irish contingent. Martin Barr has made the move to MX2 and had a pretty good debut on the smaller bore Yamaha. I think this move will see Martin regain the momentum and confidence that picked him out as one of the brightest prospects in UK racing this time last year.

Philip McLaughlin won the first non-qualifiers moto before being called to the line as first reserve for the second MX2 moto and he just missed out on scoring points as he rode from the back of the pack to finish 22nd at the flag. Ricky McKeown and Robert Hamilton ended the day 19th and 22nd overall in the MX1 class.

Next I'm going to let my mind wander over to Ballykelly and Desertmartin and the two rounds of the BYMX series. The incredible display of motorhomes and race transporters has convinced me that the youth division is where the money is in this sport of ours!

Forget about comparing this to Irish National championships, the spectacle would've dwarfed all but the big three rigs in the Maxxis British series paddock.

You want to feel the atmosphere in the pits during the qualification session – man, it was like life itself depended on moving up a couple of places with kids swapping bikes looking for that elusive half-a-second

while their dads looked on like bulldogs chewing wasps!

But there's no room on the startgate for £100K motorhomes – just one bike and one rider per gate space – which sort of brings things back to reality a little.

I was really pleased to see our local talent mixing it with the wannabe factory stars, although the event seemed to drive many youngsters out of their comfort zone and into the ambulance. Drew Goudy proved his worth on his Ride MX Yamaha in the intermediate class while Gary Gibson put his Harmony Construction Honda towards the front in the Premier class.

It was a combination of his all-action riding style and the fact that the Donegal teenager was mounted on a 125 Suzuki that put the spotlight on Luke Wilde. Two fifths, a fourth and a DNF from midfield starts provided much entertainment for all that witnessed him scream through the field on the little two-smoker.

Congratulations to all our youth racers who raced and a get well soon to the girls and boys who sustained injuries in the two meetings. And well done the NIJ MC and Cookstown club – countless hours and lots of money went into putting on this show and all in attendance will have gone home to the mainland having tasted Northern Ireland's legendary hospitality.

Moving on to the Big One at Desertmartin on August 26/27 when GP MX returns to Ireland. The event could very well see Stefan Everts claim his historic 100th GP win in this, his final season of top-flight racing. The Belgium could also – depending on his performance at Namur – be arriving in Northern Ireland as a 10-time world champ.

Gordon Crockard is well on his way back to the form that earned him the Crock Star label. This time around Gordy has the life experiences that only come with knowing both sides of Lady Luck's coin. Youth may have the legs but watching Everts spank all-comers at 33 years of age confirms that, at 27, Crockard still has plenty of time to finish at the top of his chosen profession – and Desertmartin could provide an insight into what the man from Newtownards still has to offer.

Martin Barr's move to the MX2 class will be a steep learning curve at GP level – those guys are on the gas from the drop of the gate. It will be a tough call but the race should sort itself out – the problem will be qualification.

See you all at Desertmartin...

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JONTY'S BOX

WORDS AND PHOTO BY JONTY EDMUNDS

WHY ALL THE FUSS?

IT MAY FINALLY NOW BE A 'TRUE' INTER-CONTINENTAL WORLD CHAMPIONSHIP THANKS TO EVENTS HELD IN CANADA AND THE USA THIS SUMMER BUT IS TRAVELLING OVERSEAS EACH YEAR SOMETHING THE WEC SERIES REALLY NEEDS TO BE DOING?

NORTH AMERICA is a funny old place. As anyone that has ever been there will tell you they do things a lot differently to us Europeans. What they eat is different, what they wear is different, what they drive is different and the way they go about their off-road motorcycle racing is different. In Europe we have motocross, trials, enduro, speedway and rally, in the good ol' US of A they have supercross, motocross, desert racing, cross-country racing, dirt track and hill climbing. Some of the disciplines are the same – some are very, very different. We do things our way, they do things their way.

And in doing so we get along just fine for the most part. In the States they go about their racing thinking that much of what they do is better than what the rest of the world does (and in some cases they are justified to think so) while in Europe we go about our sport in a much more reserved fashion. On the few occasions each year when what they do meets what we do (Motocross des Nations, International Six Days Enduro and Trial des Nations) we beat them some and they beat us some. That's the way it's been for years and more than likely that's going to be the way it will continue.

But when the FIM announced that in order for the WEC to keep its world championship status it needed to go play in someone else's backyard and not just in Europe, North America was selected as the host continent. With the majority of the WEC's teams happy to give it a go and travel outside of their comfort zone the WEC's promoter was sure it would be the best thing for the series since scantily clad podium girls and online results. The world's best off-road racers would finally compete head-to-head with the world's best enduro racers – so it was envisaged – ensuring some of the best racing action the WEC has ever seen with the world's off-road press sure to flock to both events.

In reality things were very different. With the exception of a handful of North America's top racers no-one in the US – competitors and industry alike – really seemed to give a s**t about the fact that the WEC had crossed the Atlantic. While the Canadian event added much to the '06 WEC series thanks to its spectacular extreme tests and unique take on what a WEC event should be – and despite the US event running smoothly – the States' top racers stayed away, as did all but three European and one US photo-journalist.

So what went wrong? Why did the US event seem to matter so little to the US motorcycle industry, media and racers?

The fact that no US rider had a hope in hell of ever winning either race in Canada or New York is, I think, largely the reason the events were so low key and why so many stayed away. Added to that is the fact that enduro sport in the US is a very different animal to the game we play in Europe. And it certainly didn't help that the States has no full-time competitors in the WEC series, has several well supported 'off-road' national championships of its own and that the rounds took place during the summer break of the States' biggest off-road championship – the GNCC series.

But a finger also has to be pointed at those in charge of promoting the WEC series – ABC Communications – and, more importantly, those marketing the US round for the real reason why the American event was a bit of a flop. Why? At the US event they had completely forgotten to inform the industry and the general public about who was competing. In a land of sell, sell, sell the promoters of the GP of USA forgot to sell the event to the US industry. The knock-on effect was a small entry and little home interest.

Of all the riders competing two received a much warmer welcome than the others – David Knight and Bartosz Oblucki. Both riders had travelled to the US to show off their talents long before the WEC event and this – plus the fact that they speak English – ensured they reaped the rewards of being 'known'. Oblucki was supported by a small but enthusiastic group of Polish and Husqvarna fans while Knight needed little introduction having won the two biggest non-championship off-road events in the US last season.

Whether the WEC heads overseas in '07 only time will tell but if it does my guess is that it will only visit Canada. An important event to the part English, part French-speaking country and not just the Canadian motorcycle industry, the round was featured on the front page of Canada's biggest daily newspaper.

If another WEC race is to take place in the States a lot more work is needed in educating the public and press as to the ways of the WEC. Off the back of this year's event things might be better received in '07 – if the series returns. But without some clever marketing strategies and genuinely enthusiastic backing from the US motorcycle industry in the form of prizes and bonuses for the best-placed US finishers then as long as the GP of USA continues to run it will see a limited number of US competitors continue to be outclassed by the cream of Europe's WEC talent...

BARTOSZ OBLUCKI WAS ONE OF ONLY TWO WEC REGULARS TO RECEIVE A REALLY WARM WELCOME



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JUMP MEISTER!

I've been riding for some time but only started racing last year. I've got up to speed on the ground but I'm losing out on the jumps and I know to become faster I have to start jumping a lot further and be more confident.

My favourite and most local track is Tonymoto near Winchester and as you may know there are a lot of jumps there. I'd been psyching myself up for weeks to do this double in the middle of the track and decided today was the day.

In the first session I came up to it fast then backed off but at the last minute thought I'd go for it and accelerated off the top. Let's just say I didn't quite make it. The second session came around and on the second-to-last lap I thought to myself what have I got to lose and just went for it. I hit the up slope and flew to the other side. That was easy – what was I so worried about? I was so pumped up I got a bit excited and cleared the first tabletop too! MX1 here I come.

Ben, Southampton

There's nowt much finer in life than the feeling you get when you clear a big jump for the first time. But why is it when you've cleared said jump it seems oh-so easy and you beat yourself up for not doing it sooner for the rest of the day? Could this be another one for the MX Files – the truth must be out there...

HAPPY ENDING!

Thanks for the advice you gave me by email and in last month's magazine. I got in touch with Alpinestars in Italy who told me to send the boots to CI Sport. To cut a long story short they've replaced the boots. I would like to thank Alpinestars for their customer service and speed in dealing with the crisis I had with my Tech 10s and also Steve at CI Sport for the quick shipment of the boots.

I'd like to tell all the readers out there not to be scared to take on the big companies if any gear is faulty. This sport is expensive enough as it is so don't be afraid to drop them a line because without us – Joe Public – they wouldn't be able to operate. I think you'll also find most of them are very helpful. Thanks again to Alpinestars for their support.

Karl, Yorkshire

Glad to be of service Karl. It's good to know CI Sport and Alpinestars treat their customers just as well as we do. Just make sure you look after these ones a bit better!



FASHION FAUX PAS!

Hey guys, I was down my local track this weekend eating roost and the like when I got to chatting to the other members of Team Speedy. After talking trash about various subjects we finally had a heated debate about a strange phenomenon which seems to affect mainly older riders. These people appear to be so out of touch with the sport that they're wearing girl's t-shirts with pink images on and stuff so we decided we just had to bring it to your attention.

Please can you publish some sort of fashion article enlightening the older riders on such matters and maybe spell out what are girls' and what are boys' clothes...

Speedy Ste, via email

Thanks for the tip-off Speedy Ste or should we say Phil Armitage – ad sales rep extraordinaire. After witnessing some of your choices in tie do you really think you're in a position to pull anyone up over their choice of off-track attire? And besides, did you not know pink is the new black and we're obviously comfortable enough with our own sexuality to wear pink anyway?

IRISH RACER!

Hi my name is Stephen and I have been reading your magazine for as long as I can remember. I'm 13 years old and I started racing in June this year. I love to read Rage, the top rider interviews and also Blarney as I'm Irish. I would love to see my letter in DBR and hopefully myself on the cover sometime. I hope my letter gets into the next issue. Keep up the good work.

Stephen, via email

Keep plugging away out on the track young Stephen and you might just be a cover star one day...

SKIDDER SEARCH

Hiya! Just trying to find out about those 661 bash hats! They're sweet, I'd like one with the white trim but I can't seem to find them anywhere – I've found the exact style I want but it's got a black trim! How can I get hold of one like Geoff Walker was wearing in that KTM test? I'm gagging for one so if you could shed some light on the matter that would be grand.

Al, via email

So you wanna be like Wakker eh? Well, we can only suggest you start training at McDonalds then you give CI Sport a yell on 01372 378000 – they should be able to tell you which dealers have white-trimmed 661 skidders in stock!

HAM BONE!

Good day to you all. Check out these pics of me – I'm ripped off my ***s on morphine keeping the DBR love alive in one and the other is one of my x-rays (I have another where you can see my Frank and Beans – if you'd like me to send it let me know). The x-ray's taken after my leg was put into traction but if you look above the break you can see where it popped out of the skin.

That last issue was a damn good read – I think I read every word printed. My compliments to the chef.

Ham, Poole Hospital

Chris, Chris, Chris, Chris, Chris! If we wanted to see an x-ray image of your 'Frank and Beans' we'd just use the x-ray specs we bought from that ad in the back of t'Beano when we were nippers – that was the best 50 pence we ever spent! Seriously though, hope your leg gets better soon little buddy!



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WHY STICKERS GRAPHICS KITS

If Why Stickers were to import their graphics to dealers in an eastern communist country you could say that there would be Bull in a China shop! Ho ho!

Seriously though the Italian made graphics have now arrived in the UK thanks to mxbits.com. But it's not just the Bull range they're bringing as there are many Euro team kits including this awesome Martin Honda one.

Price: Bull Range full kit inc backgrounds £129.95

Bull Range shroud kit only £39.95

Martin Honda replica kit £149.95

Supplier: mxbits.com

01689 842125





VON ZIPPER SUMMER T-SHIRT SELECTION

If the ever rising temperature in DBR's penthouse office is anything to go by then summer must truly be here. And even though it's probably gonna be howling it down by the time you read this we figured now's as good a time as any to introduce you to the all-new Von Zipper range of tee-shirts – they're fab!

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Supplier: vonzipper.com
02392 465577

BLINK MX PRE-PRINTED BACKGROUNDS

Yee-haw! Southern boys Bo and Luke Duke and their backward inbred cousin Danny Magic would be proud as punch to run these good ol' General Lee inspired pre-printed backgrounds from custom graphics specialist Blink MX if there was ever a rerun of the Hazzard County motocross race. And despair ye not, it's not just the brothers Duke and cousin Danny who can get their dirty Confederate paws on Blink MX's top-notch line of personalised products – no sirree! And that's because Tom at Blink will print whatever it is that makes you happy – even if it's something so silly as SuttDawg Energy lower fork-leg protector stickers.

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Supplier: blinkmx.com
01487 842377



THROTTLE JOCKEY PEAK HONDA REPLICA GRAPHICS

Some 15 years ago Team Pro Circuit's Peak Hondas were way too cool for school and this was mostly because the blue and white beasts sported sweet graphics from a brand new company – Throttle Jockey. Since then TJ have been responsible for producing some of the most drool-worthy sticker kits available – including the Noleen Yamahas and many more factory Hondas than you could ever shake at a sweaty steak. It's now 2006 (really Sherlock?) and TJ's original graphics kits have Peaked again. The beautiful kits come complete with a white/black gripper seat cover and are well worth taking a Peak at if you wanna pimp out your latter day CRF.

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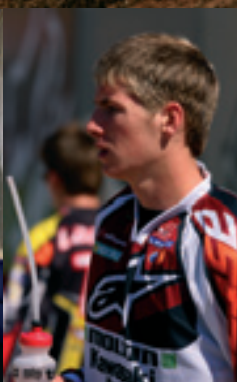



profile

THE CONTENDER!

He's young, super-fast and super-focused and with a new factory deal and a former world champ in his corner, Tommy Searle could go all the way...

Words by Jon Bentman Photos by Redeye




 A photograph of a young man, Tommy Searle, in a boxing ring. He is wearing a white tank top, red boxing gloves, and a red headguard with 'BBE' on it. He is holding a yellow sign that reads 'ATTITUDE NEVER LET THEM PERSUADE YOU THAT THINGS ARE TOO DIFFICULT OR IMPOSSIBLE'. The background shows a boxing ring with ropes and a red punching bag.

ATTITUDE
NEVER LET THEM
PERSUADE YOU THAT
THINGS ARE TOO
DIFFICULT OR IMPOSSIBLE

TOMMY★

WE'LL PUT it like this — the lad's made a good start! Young Tommy Searle's certainly made a promising beginning to his professional motocross career, he's done enough to be identified as a definite prospect and given the right work ethic and the right support then, yes, we can expect great things from him.

We want to express it like that because it's important to put the right perspective on his achievements so far — and it's fair to say it's the same perspective as Tommy himself places on the job. Basically all good — but the real work starts now.

"I know I'm doing pretty good for my age but I just want to keep doing better. I know I can beat those guys so I keep working hard knowing it'll come."

Tommy's not speaking of British championship rivals Carl Nunn and Billy Mackenzie here, he's referring to the cream of the MXGP MX2 field. He's mindful that such talk might sound arrogant or misplaced and he says so directly but he's 100 per cent accurate in what he's saying, his immediate job now — aside from tying up this year's British MX2 title — is to win the 2007 MX2 world championship.

And rather than rattle on, fawning over the lad's abilities, we'll instead tell you it straight — just like Tommy does. Yes, Tommy could well do the job in 2007. He has the skills, the determination, an almost cold-blooded, dispassionate need to prove he's the best. And he wants that championship because it's the next step in his career, taking him closer to greater glories. World championships are there to be won but being the best is what it's about. And by the way, this is a career — not some boyhood dream, no fairytale adventure. This is the real, hard, business world of motocross. So don't talk goo-goo to Tommy, he won't offend you with a put-down but he will walk away — after all he's got work to do.

"I don't measure myself against others,"

says Tommy. But we do, that's how we get a measure on a rider's progress. So let's tell you just how he's doing, measured against the career of, say, Ben Townley.

BT's first year in MXGP he finished 33rd with a best placing of 10th. Tommy placed 40th in his first year but scored points in four out of six races. In BT's second year he was second at the first round, won a GP (Udavella) and finished sixth overall. Tommy's currently eighth in the championship, having stood on the podium twice (both thirds). So by BT's early career standards, which are as stellar as they get, he's not doing bad — nearly there.

The significant difference between BT and Tommy, though, is Tommy's British. And we mention this because being British can be a disadvantage. It's probably to do with the strength of our domestic championship — British riders can find their focus compromised. Winning the British championship is a big thing, both from a rewards point of view and from the dedication it takes to do so. Top GP racers race in the British so it's a toughie to win in its own right. And so the effort it takes to get ahead in the British often weakens the rider's competitiveness in the GPs — sometimes physically and sometimes in terms of resolve.

"A lot of people think 'third — that's good, second — that's good' but I'm not happy unless I win the race. Obviously at the GPs I have to be happy with something like third overall and I was really, really happy. And the first time I did it I was very happy but that second time in Sweden it didn't feel as good.

"So my expectations have grown. I've gone from thinking top 10 at the beginning of the year — and you don't like to say too much stuff like that because people think you're getting big headed. So I don't tell everyone but I just want to keep getting better and better. And it's not 10th now, it has to be second or first."

It's this focus on wanting to rise to the

biggest league — that of racing in America — that keeps Tommy's hunger going for GP victory. For Tommy neither the British championship nor GPs are a goal in themselves, merely stepping stones.

But how is Tommy so consistently competitive in GPs when the likes of Billy Mackenzie and Carl Nunn are blowing so hot and cold (sometimes stone cold)? It's worth letting Tommy discuss the matter at length.

"There are a lot of riders in GPs who are so fast. So you have to get a good start there. Get it right and you can run with the top guys and break away. I haven't been getting such good starts but if I get sixth I'm staying there. Right now I need maybe to pull a holeshot and take it from there.

"It's definitely more pressure in the GPs. With those heat races a lot of people go crazy and there are lots of crashes. I haven't had so much trouble though. I've only crashed out of a heat race once and gone to the last chance qualifier. And I won that.

"So you need to step it up, get that good start in the heat race and run with the top guys, break away from the frantic guys who are battling seventh through 10th — they're going crazy, you don't want to be there. So you get that start, put in some fast laps, make the break, then settle in and don't go so hard, you've got to save yourself for the Sunday. If you do your work early, get in that top five then you're in a good position for the main races.

"Also you have one free practice and then one 40-minute timed practice to get your qualifying race gate — so that's a good time to get in a fast lap. I see Billy and Carl struggle with qualifying and I don't know why, they should be top three. But Carl seems to always get a good start and he does it from there. I don't think he's overly bothered about the qualifying, he knows he can go well in the race. The same with Billy. But the way I look at it

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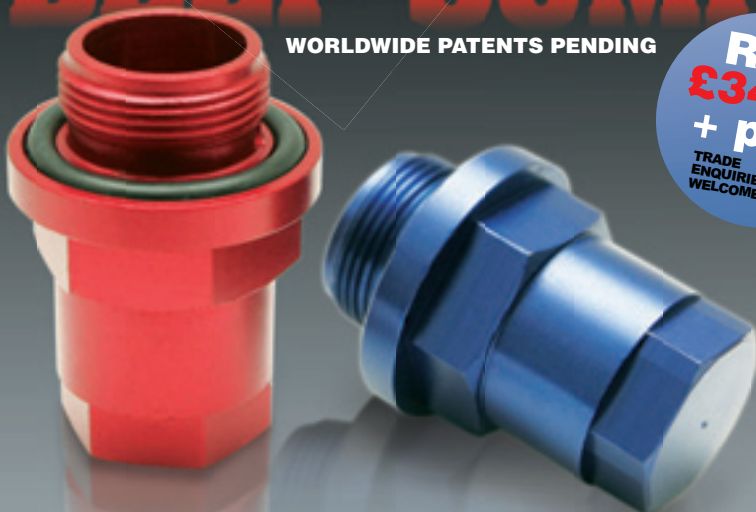
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I have to get that good qualifier. It gives me a good gate and that makes the race easier.

"So I always try and get a fast lap in. It means I get a good start for the race. It stands to reason, you get a good qualifying time you get a good gate for your qualifier and you get a good result so you get a good start for the main. Everything goes together. If you go to that last chance you're only going to get an outside gate and you don't get a good start – your weekend's a mess."

Tommy relays all this in a matter of fact manner, as you can sense. Like he's having to spell out basic playground etiquette to some wet-eared first former. Is this really necessary? But it is. Despite the mechanics of these things seeming so simple so few get them right, or even acknowledge they're right. In Tommy's mind it's a straightforward situation. You get the qualifying time, you get the gate, you cruise the qualifier, you get the gate for the main, you get the podium. And then you get the title. And then you get to go to the States.

Of course, in the meantime – in case you hadn't noticed – this cool eye-on-the-prize young man has seized control of the British championship. Two straight wins at the sixth round, Skelder Bank, have given Tommy a nine-point lead with two rounds to go. Not a massive lead but it's a significant stage of the championship in which to take control. And it's that control – not the points margin – that's particularly significant.

"Yes, it was a good weekend, I knew going into it that I had to get wins. So I got two good starts and went on to win quite easily. It was just me and my team-mate really, we were quite a way ahead of everyone else in both races.

"It wasn't just a good luck weekend either, the past few races I've been beating them [Carl and Billy]. At the beginning of the year at



profile



TOMMY ON SWANNY

Tackling his team-mate

The relationships between team-mates can work in many different ways – and sometimes not work at all! Tommy's team-mate is 21-year-old South African Gareth Swanepoel who's no mean talent himself and he's clearly pushing Tommy all the way. So is the rivalry a component in Tommy's rapid rise to prominence?

"Definitely, because Gareth doesn't want to be beaten by me. We get on real well but of all the guys out there he doesn't want to be beaten by me. It's the way he thinks. It doesn't bother me so much but it does help.

"Like in Sweden, we were lying ninth and 10th. And if I passed a guy then he'd pass the guy. We kept doing this, working up the field and we got up to Marc De Reuver, a guy I'd normally think I can't pass. But because Gareth was there I passed him, as did Gareth. So we went onto the next guy – just because I didn't want Gareth to pass me. We finished third and fourth. Definitely that brings us on.

"At Whitby it was good too, we went 1-2. If he hadn't been there, yes, I'd probably have won but not by so much, he makes me push on. We never practice together though because he lives in Belgium – I think I've only been riding with him twice."

Hawkstone I was kind of on their pace, I had a third and a second and was chasing them down. So all year I've kind of been on their pace. Maybe I was hanging it out back then but now I feel comfortable running their pace. It's not a question now of can I run with them – it's a matter of every weekend I want to beat them. I've definitely stepped it up a level."

Talk to any motocrosser for more than five minutes and they'll drop 'stepping it up' into the conversation in one context or another. It's one of the most overused phrase in the sport. But it is nonetheless a vital matter. Riders have to improve their game continually if they are to factor in any championship. So how has Tommy got here?

Only three seasons ago he was riding 85s. He ended 2005 as Under 21 champ and fifth in the British MX2 championship. Getting from there to here is a fair 'step up' so how has he done it?

"I had a hard winter of training. My trainer Kirk Gibbons – without him I wouldn't have been able to do this – he's made sure I've had the strength and the fitness for this season. I telephone him every day and he tells me what to do. It's a strict programme but it's clearly working for me.

"The team has been working well too. I've had a good practice bike every week so I've been training hard and with the bike I'm able to ride hard too – I go as fast as I can every time I

ride. Just riding most weekends, riding against the top guys, it brings me on every weekend."

It's always the same answer isn't it? So there must be a truth in the seemingly standard patter. And there is, it's kind of in the detail, as Tommy reveals after repeated questioning.

"Yes, I went to America over the winter and that helped. We went to California and I had Giz [Gareth Edmunds, Tommy's mechanic] there with the pitboard. I was just riding on my own. I'm not one of those guys that needs to be with others to go for it. I can put in 100 per cent on my own. I do every lap hard and make sure I do 35 minutes plus two laps every time I go out. I may not feel good after it but I still go out and do a second moto.

"And you know, last year I wasn't properly in the Molson Kawasaki team. This year I am. It's better materials to work with, the Kawasaki is a lot better itself this year and every weekend it's good inside and out. No problem there. And we get along well, the team works well together, it's been good for me and them. This year is the team's first GP podiums, I guess I've brought the team along but they've also brought me along so everyone's happy."

Some key issues in there. For one we have to be impressed that Tommy is able to generate his speed himself – he doesn't need faster riders to learn from, he's no follower. That really is a hell of a deal. Then there's the application. He didn't go to California for the scene. ▶



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He went to get himself up to speed – 40-minute moto after 40-minute moto. And then finally he combined all the groundwork with the infrastructure of a well-run and motivated team. Yeah, for Molson Kawasaki [MJ Church as we know them] this is success long overdue.

So with the British championship within his capability, what are his feelings on staying ahead of Carl and Billy? "I'll just get on with it. If I do it I'll beat Jamie's [Dobb] record for being the youngest to win a British championship – something like that. So Jamie's nervous but he wants me to do it, he wants me to do well because I'm riding for him as well."

We'll come to Dobber's involvement in a moment. "I just want to go out and win the races. I've only got a nine-point lead. But I know I can beat those guys. There's not much pressure on me to win though because it's not like if I don't win I won't get this or won't get that. I just want to win it for myself. If I win I'll be happy. But if not, I won't be majorly ****ed off. I don't have the major pressure that there is for Carl."

What Tommy's talking about there – not the Carl bit – is what's coming next.

Next for Tommy Searle is a new team. Kawasaki have confirmed he's leaving them at the end of the season. What Tommy can't say yet but what the entire motocross paddock are taking as a done-deal is that he's going to ride in the KTM factory team next year. His focus, as we've said already, being the 2007 MX2 world championship.

The reason everyone's tipping KTM is because Tommy's being managed by Jamie



Dobb (who's working for a major American sports management company). And we all know Dobber won his 125 world championship for KTM and however much damage his autobiography is said to have done to his relationship with the Mattighofen management, Dobber's going to be closer to that team than any other in the paddock. Besides, it's apparently a big money deal with big backing and with strings leading across the Atlantic. Who else do you think it could be?

"It is settled," confirms Tommy. "Kawasaki has said I'll be leaving. I am leaving the team. I am going to a different, bigger team and hopefully I can achieve the goals I want to. I'm still only young but I know what I want to achieve. I've been with Kawasaki since 85s. I've been where I wanted to be, they've always given me what I want, I haven't wanted to be anywhere else. But now I have to look forward to the future and they couldn't offer me what I want for the future."

"And I believe I deserve what I get, Jamie knows what I should be on. If it was me I wouldn't even say the figures he knows I should be on. He knows what he's doing, he knows what's due. He knows what he needs to know."

Significantly, the deal properly marks the end of the old ways for Tommy. The links with his parents, his days in the juniors are being severed with this deal. Although he'll still live at home for the time being.

"It's good because my dad has his own business and while my family have been a big part in this and I wouldn't have been able to do it without them, now they can't do this, they haven't the time, it's not their thing. It was time to work with Jamie."

There's something very proper in all this. Tommy's doing the work, he's putting in 100 per cent effort and he's clearly a very exceptional

racer. But he's already doing the business side of motocross right. He's trusting to a trainer who's already proven successful (with Dobber). He's trusting his career guidance to a man who's been there and done that (the hard way and not always the right way as Tommy knows). And he's more than aware of the bigger picture. He's got at least another decade, probably more in this business called motocross.

"You have to look ahead in one way and day-by-day in another. I have to work on it," he says with commendable clarity. "Yes, I want to be world champ then I will go to America in 2008 and win out there."

"I'll not go to MX1 immediately because I'm not the strongest and where I am at the moment it's not where I want to be. I want to be in America and make it big out there. And I can hopefully do that with the support I'll have. Have a good year in Europe and then to America."

Even then Tommy's wise enough to see there are pitfalls and there are mountains to climb. "I don't want to do supercross in my opening year. You see a lot of riders getting injured and that's not what I will do. To go from here to supercross there, you can't do that. We don't ride it the way they do, our supercross isn't like theirs. But obviously that's where the big money is. So I'd do outdoor then supercross to feel my way into it. I'll take my time."

"Why do I want to be there? It's bigger money and just bigger. You go into garages [petrol stations] and there'll be a big picture of Chad Reed on the wall. It's in every garage. Everyone knows about it, it's bigger. It's a national sport there. It's like football here."

And that's Tommy Searle. Young. Fast. Committed. Focused. Professional. Not the most personable (yet – he's only 17 after all) and still with a lot to learn.

But, yes, we believe in him...

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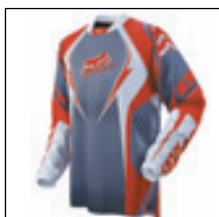
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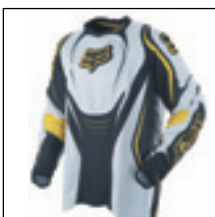
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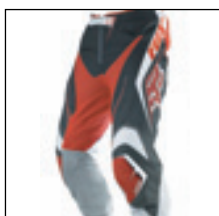
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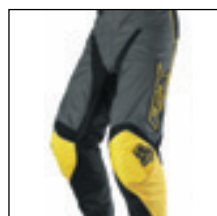
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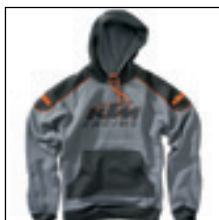
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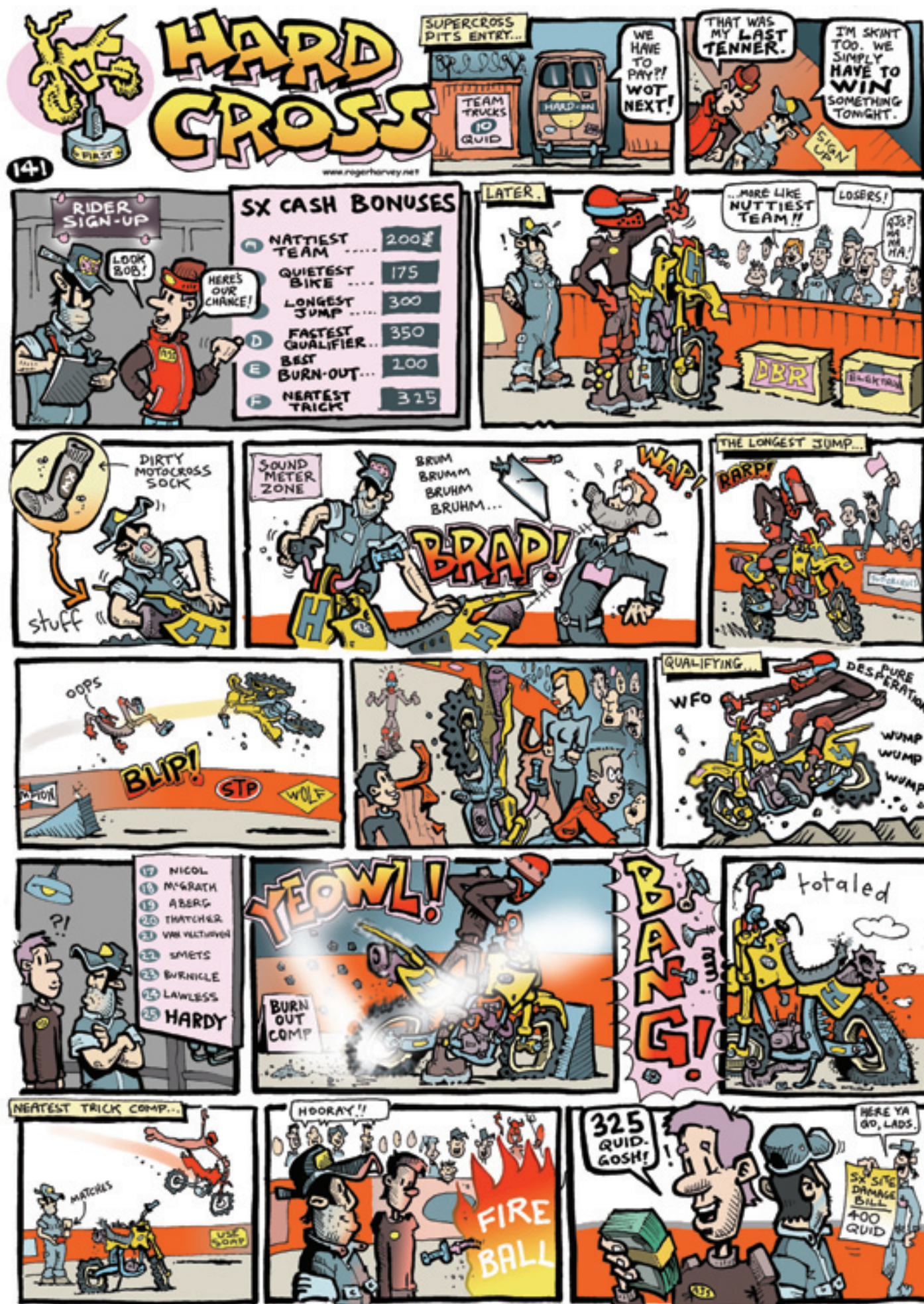


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TESTING TIMES!

Weeks of frustration are replaced with joy when Tanky's reunited with his toy...

Words by Suttty Photos by still-mx.co.uk

AFTER SPENDING four weeks sat on the sidelines with broken toes I was absolutely gagging to get back out on the CRF to do some riding. And as if, by magic the chance arose as a new club in the north-west – Monster MX – were holding their first meeting of the year just 40 minutes down the road from DBR Towers.

The track and racing were awesome and to make the weekend doubly (or is that triply?) satisfying a chance meeting with Bickers' northern area super rep Mike Shaw has led to Bickers supplying Maxxis tyres and Motorex Oils for us – that's the Magazine Machine test team – to run relentlessly for the remainder of the year.

Over the past few years we've exhaustively

tested the entire Motul range of lubricants and found it to be more than adequate for our needs – on both two-stroke bikes and four. On the Honda, Motul's 10w40 5100 has been used in both sides of the engine and to be fair it's been doing a great job. It will be interesting to see if Motorex's Cross Power 10w50 is perceived to perform as well or possibly even better than the Motul equivalent.

We'll also be using the full range of Motorex workshop consumables such as chain lube, bike wash spray, brake cleaner, carb cleaner and so on and so forth so we'll keep you up to speed with how well they work too.

Along with boxes and boxes of Motorex lubricants came a palletful of Maxxis tyres. I've

used Maxxis tyres in the past – Maxxis 7304 and 7305 (intermediate) on last year's CR250 – and I even bought a Maxxis M7312 (soft/intermediate) rear to put on Geoff's weapon – that's his KX250 – before I thrashed it around Culham for the British Masters. They seem to perform reasonably well and last longer than most brands of tyre – Geoff's only recently changed the one I fitted to his bike way back in March although it was totally slick!

For the past month I've been using Michelin tyres on the CRF – an MS3 on the front and an S12 on the rear. The S12 is predominantly a soft ground tyre but during its nine hours of intense use it's seen everything from peat bogs and tree roots to polished blue groove.



Time for some CRF TLC at MotoXtreme



You gotta love a bit of rock to nose action



Tanky was itching to get back out on his four-fiddy

Chopper squad!

Marshfield madness

Molson Holdings (title sponsor of the MJ Church Kawasaki team – aka Molson Kawasaki – and supplier of New Holland plant machinery for the British MX GP) is a company run by all-round good guy Robin Powell. As well as being a fan of heavy plant machinery, motocross and Magners, Robin also likes playing with helicopters which is how we came to have one at our disposal for our photoshoot at Marshfield.

Robin reckons it's not the size of your chopper that matters but what you can do with it but since he was concentrating on riding his KX250 it was up to his best mate Andy to take control of the, erm, controls. And the good news is when Andy takes hold of the stick and pedals he knows exactly what to do with them. This has to be good news for Wakker as we sent him skywards to get a bird's eye view of proceedings.

With myself in control of the bike and Wakker not in control of the chopper we asked new photog on the block – Myles Adburgham – to take control of things behind the lens and then went at it for the most surreal 60 minutes of our lives. And when it was all over Myles had a bunch of awesome shots and Geoff and I had the shakes after both experiencing near death experiences – I missed the chopper by inches mid bum-whip and some technical difficulties saw the helicopter drop out of the sky once or twice.

Thanks to Robin, Andy, Myles, Big Rog, Godfrey, Rowan Machine and Mike Church for helping make it all happen!



And surprisingly the S12 has performed well on them all. I can only guess this is partly because the wide spread block pattern is able to dig deep in the soft stuff while the malleable compound sticks to hard surfaces without flexing too much. Usually soft compound tyres like the S12 wear down quickly but this just wasn't happening – I reckon I mustn't be getting on the gas hard enough! – although two days of riding down at Marshfield did finally kill the tyre. I was very sad to see it go. Sniff!

While I was down Marshfield way I hijacked a small corner of the MotoXtreme workshop so I could give the CRF a little TLC and a bit of a

facelift – mmm Peaky. The CRF's Big Bang hour meter indicated the bike had logged up 15 hours of use at that point so I figured I'd ask DBR Technical Eejit Godfrey Walker to check the valve clearances and repack the silencer – there's no point in running a quiet pipe if it needs repacking.

The valve clearances were spot on but the silencer packing had indeed blown and was in need of replacing. For a step-by-step guide on how to repack your own four-stroke silencer check out Walker's World on page 58. We also gave the CRF a good check over and I can honestly say it's all in tip top condition and

showing only minimal signs of wear and surprisingly very little crash damage – I'm obviously calming down a bit in my old age.

I was actually anticipating encountering a couple more problems with the CRF as a long-term test on a perfectly-performing bullet-proof bike can make for dull reading. But it seems that our blend of aftermarket parts and pre-ride prep – as well as the refinements that Honda have made over the '05 and earlier model CRFs – have helped us achieve what we wanted to do in the first place. And that's make a perfectly-performing bullet-proof bike. Sometimes life's just one vicious circle!



DBR TESTED!

Lazer MX7 helmet

When UK Lazer importers MDL offered me the use of an MX7 helmet to test I was spoilt for choice with the many different colour schemes and styles on offer. But, after a fair bit of oohing and aahing I narrowed it down to a toss-up between the very stylish Everts replica or one of the two Hot Rod models.

Even though we share nine world titles between us and I have total respect for his riding skills I've never been one of Stefan's biggest fans. His MX1 winning streak has ruined my Sunday afternoons spent watching Eurosport so I finally decided to opt for the red – it also comes in gold – Hot Rod model.

My decision was doubly justified by the fact I enjoy Hot food and Rod – from Rainbow's Rod, Jane and Freddy – inspired my 'look' while I was growing up. Sorted. When the helmet first arrived in the DBR office my initial impression was that the MX7 is a lightweight, solid-feeling and great-looking piece of kit. And after shoe-horning my mass of hair inside its Coolmax lining I was totally impressed by the way it felt and fitted atop my noggin.

As a double bonus I also found my favourite model of goggle – the Smith Piston – fits perfectly inside the MX7's eye-port. That's pretty much good news for everyone because the Pistons are probably the largest framed peeper-protectors on the market today. As well as looking and feeling good, the Lazer MX7 is one of the safest helmets on the market mostly thanks

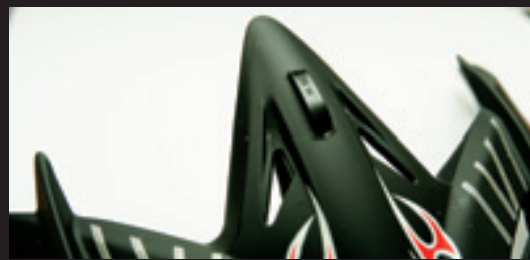
to its multi-directional composite fiber, carbon and aramid fiber reinforced shell. In theory this helmet should perform when you need it most. The level of protection this helmet offers is not something I particularly want to put to the test but we'll see how the season pans out.

One thing that's not so great on the MX7 is the peak. Pretty much everyone I know who owns an MX7 has broken at least one peak due to a design flaw where the front mounting meets the main body – it's just not tough enough! But there is a fix and I've gotta thank Brit champs runner Nez Parker for showing it to me. It's actually possible to cable tie the broken pieces together by making a couple of slits in the peak and when the job's done properly the repair doesn't detract from the helmet's overall look.

TLD GP Racewear

The Troy Lee Designs range of GP pants, jersey and gloves are all very competitively priced but still have the kind of look, fit and function you'd expect from any TLD product.

However, four-stroke pilots who run their front pipes without a heat-shield – like me – will find they'll melt a hole through the inner knee area in record time so I'd personally recommend spending some extra cash on the top-of-the-range SE pants instead. That said – and even with the extra 'venting' – the GP pants are still something I wear on a regular basis because I like the way they fit and even after a fair few washes and spin cycles they look like new (except for the burnt out knee)!





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**Make a Desertmartin date for the
Grand Prix of Northern Ireland**

Words and photos by Suttty

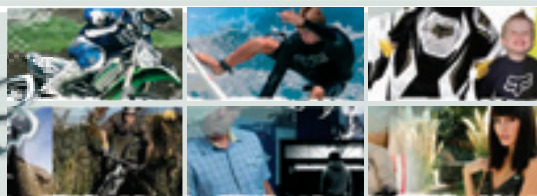
LIGHTS!

WITH THE promise of a three-day weekend and skies full of sunny weather – okay, we lied about the weather – there's not a lot to stop you from heading to Desertmartin for the Grand Prix of Northern Ireland this coming August Bank Holiday weekend. And if the warm Irish welcome alone can't convince you to come to the jump-filled, sandy Porter's Pit circuit then maybe the thought of four motos of bar-to-bar racing by the world's fastest racers will!



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Last year's GP saw Marc De Reuver and Mike Alessi go to war – the Dutchman spanked his US ass!



Cairoli needs a good result in NI if he's going to hang on to his crown



Coppins and De Dycker are both capable of podium finishes



Billy Mac's won in Japan this year – will we get more of the same in Northern Ireland?



Home heroes GC and Martin Barr

The two-day event on August 26/27 is round 13 of the 15-race series and if there's one man who's hoping it's lucky 13 then it's MX1's #13 – Gordon Crockard. The Crock Star is no stranger to Porter's Pit and it's been a happy hunting ground for the Newtownards boy in the past. Gordy's returned to fine form recently and you can guarantee the Wulfsport Honda team-leader is fully fired up for this race – so watch out!

Of course Gordy's gonna have his work cut out if he's gonna beat Stefan Everts who could well be a 10-time world champion by the time you're reading this if all goes to plan for the 33-year-old in Namur. And if Stefan wins the Belgian race overall that means he'll be out to claim his 100th GP win at Desertmartin. If you witnessed the way he passed and left fully-fit Kiwis Ben Townley and Josh Coppins at last year's event you'll know he's more than up to the task!

But Coppins himself is getting stronger week-by-week and by the end of August the tenacious Kiwi – who's already done the double at the Desertmartin round of the British champs this year – will be a real contender as he looks to take his maiden GP moto win of the year.

And what about Josh's CAS team-mate Ken De Dycker? Keeno broke down in tears at last year's Irish event after his bike self-destructed in moto two costing the lanky Belgian star any chance of sixth in the MX1 title chase. But now mounted on the best bike Honda have to offer and with Ken looking fitter and meaner than ever he has to be considered a constant podium threat.

But who else will be up for the win? The Belgian Suzuki pairing of Kevin Strijbos and Steve Ramon have what it takes as does Tanel Leok on the factory Kawasaki but why would Stefan let them start winning now when he's beat them back all season long?

Things are much more wide open in MX2 and we've already seen seven moto winners – that's Pourcel, Cairoli, Philippaerts, Rattray, ►



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Carl Nunn has plenty of experience of the track



James Noble's fighting to keep his #10 plate in GPs



Everts is on course for GP win #100 at Desertmartin



De Reuver, MacKenzie and Gundersen – this season and there's potentially four more including battling Brits Tommy Searle and Carl Nunn. Nunn's been blazingly fast at the GPs in recent weeks while Tommy Gun's been firing for a moto win ever since making his premier podium appearance at Matterley Basin.

And unlike in MX1 where Everts has run away at the front of the championship the MX2 title chase is still very much alive as three riders all have a good chance of claiming the crown come the end of the season.

Christophe Pourcel leads the hunt by 34 before Belgium but impatient Italians Antonio Cairoli and David Philippaerts have been much faster – but also much more inconsistent – throughout the year. All three have previously visited Porter's Pit although only Antonio featured in the top 10 last year – Philippaerts had his hands full fighting off that uber-temperamental pint-sized Yank Mike Alessi while the younger Pourcel brother simply had an inconsistent day at the office.

But what about the Brits? Aside from the three podium contenders in MX2 we can also hope for strong points scoring performances from Shaun Simpson, Martin Barr and Jason

Dougan who've all lit the wick in the second half of the season. And let's not forget perennial comeback kid Tom Church who'll be out to prove it's not just his family ties that keep him grand prix racing or indeed Wulfsport Honda's Scott Probert who's yet to make the GP grade this campaign.

James Noble will be looking to improve on his 12th spot in the MX1 championship. It's been a funny year for the Yorkshireman who's not being delivering results half as frequently as Hovis deliver t'daily bread. Welsh disco legend Mark Jones and the South African with Oirish roots Neville Bradshaw will also both be looking to increase their GP points haul.

As Youthstream won't release the full entry list until one week before the gate drops at Desertmartin we can only guess who the British and Irish wild-card riders will be. However, we're thinking British boys Brad Anderson, Wayner Smith, Jake Nicholls and Steven Clarke will all get the MX2 call-up along with Irishmen Wayne Garrett, Phil McCullough and possibly Dublin's Stuart Edmunds. Over in MX1 it should be Robert Hamilton, Ricky McKeown and Tommy Merton who'll be getting to turn their wheels around the Pit.

gp preview

New factory KTM signing Tommy Searle will be looking for a podium in one of his last outings on the Molson Kawasaki



ESSENTIAL INFO!

Travel info!

If you live on the mainland you've basically got two options if you wanna visit the GP. Option #1 is to fly to either the Belfast City or International airports and then hire a car, blag a lift or a hail a taxi to the track.

As a rough guide a taxi from the international airport to the track costs £37 with flights available for next to nowt from a selection of low cost airlines like Ryanair and Easyjet.

The other alternative is to drive to a port and then get yourself a ferry across the Irish Sea. For the best deals around call Louise at Nutt Travel on 028 7035 1199 or email her at louise@nuttravel.com

There is a third option – to swim – but not even a Stevie Mills full of Havana Club rum would do that!

How much?

Adult weekend passes are a bargain £25 for adults, £15 for 10 to 16-year-olds with nippers younger than that getting in for free.

There are also corporate and VIP packages available – check out www.nievents.co.uk or call 028 9066 6661 for details.

Somewhere to stay?

If you need accommodation your best bet is to look online at www.discovernorthernireland.com or call the Northern Ireland Tourist Board on 028 9023 1221.



FIGHT BACK!

Five rounds into the MX2 world championship battle and David Philippaerts was on the ropes, out of touch with the leaders and out of favour with KTM – then an inspired team reshuffle turned his season around...

Words and photos by Alex Hodgkinson

A THIRD of the way into the MX2 world series David Philippaerts was 76 points off the pace and his title hopes were buried. Four races later the 22-year-old Italian had scored 184 points out of a possible 200 and had replaced Tyla Rattray and Marc De Reuver as KTM's top man!

So what had happened? "New team, new people, new bike, new head!"

David speaks English like he rides a bike – pure commitment with few frills and a willingness to learn. A year ago he hardly spoke a word of English and, aided and abetted by his Belgian dad, our last interview for DBR took place in lingua franca – a hybrid mixture of our

limited knowledge of each others' tongues.

Mid-summer 2005 had seen David record five straight podiums as he was rewarded for top six motos on the outpaced two-stroke with a ride on the factory SX250F left vacant by an injured Tyla Rattray. Long before season end his transfer full-time to the Champ squad for 2006 was sealed as Mattighofen invested in a four-rider dream team to regain the title they had held every year bar once in the previous five years.

But while Rattray was winning the first three GPs and De Reuver never out of the top five, David was down and out. The GPs had started

well enough with victory in the first moto of the campaign but the Italian was not happy. "I still don't understand how I won the first moto at Zolder. I wasn't fast but the other riders all made mistakes and I ended up winning it."

The MX2 factory KTM had changed significantly during the winter and David didn't like it. "I didn't have a good feeling with the bike. I must admit that at first I wasn't sure where the problem for me was – if it was the gearbox, the suspension, whatever – but I knew that I didn't feel good on it. I told the team I couldn't ride it but they simply answered that Tyla and Marc were winning so it couldn't be the bike. I even



profile

David used his head to win at Matterley Basin

began to believe it myself, that the problem was in my head. I was doubting myself and digging myself into a hole."

Research with independent sources who have tried the factory '06 confirm David's belief that he needed a different gearbox. "They changed the gearbox looking to improve the starts but I couldn't ride it. Call me lazy but I like long gears which will pull through a wide range, just like we had in 2005."

The '06 factory gears are even shorter than on the production model. "I don't know if they asked Tyla and Marc if they wanted this but I do know that they did not ask me. The three of us

are very different riders in our style and we each have different needs. I like one thing, Tyla likes another and Marc something else, Carl too. But for the team we should all ride the same and it wasn't working out.

"I was struggling with the new bike and then I got the feeling that no-one was listening to me. Perhaps it was a problem that I was still based in Italy. We had the apartment at Lommel but the temperature was hardly above zero at the start of the year and it was agreed that I could carry on living in Italy where the weather was fine and the tracks were good for training. I called to say I wanted to go testing in Holland to

find the problem and I even flew there but no-one wanted to go testing. In the end I was scared to ask again. I felt like I was the third wheel!"

After that victory in the opening GP moto of the season just 95 points were added in the next nine motos. That's not even an average of top 10 and not the scoring Mattighofen expected from a factory rider.

Even with two members of the Champ team running world top three alarm bells started to ring in Austria and Pit Beirer intervened. "Pit saw the problem and asked Georges Jobe if he would help. Before Japan I was so down, ►

**IN TIMES OF CHANGE..
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David and Cairoli
were oh-so close
last year in SA...

doubting myself, doubting the bike and I would have taken any solution to get out of the hole. Pit said it was perhaps even possible to switch classes to MX1 but first I should try racing with the Jobe team for three or four GPs in MX2 and then we would talk about it again."

They never had to discuss such a move! "I immediately had a good feeling for the bike Georges gave me to race and we soon developed a good personal relationship. I have Claudio Benevelli for my suspension, Kempe makes the engine and Georges tests the bike too and discusses settings with me. Together they have made me a bike on which I felt comfortable – the gearbox I have now has a very similar feeling to the one we used on the factory bike last year [It's actually the gearbox Kempe – that's Juha Kempainen – built for Ivan Cervantes to win the E1 world enduro title last year].

"Perhaps the language barrier did not help at Champ. No matter how good you get at speaking a foreign language it remains difficult to express yourself precisely except in your native tongue and at the MX1 team I have Claudio and also Jobe can speak good Italian.

"And I now have people around me that I can trust. If I tell them that I don't feel happy with something they immediately want to find a solution. Everyone in the team is very straight with each other but everyone listens to everyone else. Georges and the team have never told me that the problem is with me. The atmosphere, the feeling, it is all completely different and everyone has seen the result – in my first four races four podiums, a hat-trick of wins, perfect.

"My head is turned round – when you feel good on the bike it is good for your confidence and you become a different rider, a different

person. I have a good feeling and everything is suddenly so easy on the track."

Results speak for themselves. "I had tested in the week after Japan and I was still a little tense on the bike in Bulgaria. But I got a podium, on the same points as De Reuver who was winning the GP. And Italy was perfect. My home GP, I love the track, the public were great and I had a great battle with Cairoli, passing him for the win. A perfect day!

"Tony and me have been friends for a long time and I think I enjoy racing him more than anyone else. We have such different styles and often take completely different lines. It is so exhilarating to race with him because of this, although it can be a little dangerous at times as our lines often cross and we come close to a collision but it is always very fair.

"I am pretty easy going and I get on with everybody. I had a problem with Guarneri in

profile

**...and there was more of
the same in Sun City in '06**



**A home win went
down well in Italy**





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Teutschenthal but we talked straight away after the race, cleared the air and now we have no problem with each other at all.

"I didn't really like the track in England – it was very fast and not so technical – but this seems to bring out the best in me. Last year we had tracks in France and South Africa with so many SX type sections which I didn't like but I won both races!

"Anyway, the first heat in England was good, I had a good feeling with the tyres and was able to run away. In the second heat I was very fast for 20 minutes but Tony's lines were better at the end and it was wiser for me to let him go and settle for the overall win. It was a reverse of Montevarchi where I had found new lines at the end and I was faster."

A fortnight later in Sweden followed the most sensational finish in GP history. Cairoli punched the air with delight as he flew past the chequered flag alone but the official finish line is the light beam which records the transponders and that was, as usual, at the base of the jump.

At Uddevalla the situation was even stranger

as the launch pad followed immediately on a turn. The beam was erected across the apex and old fox Jobe had noticed. "When we walked the track I told David not to worry about the jump in a tight finish, just to go for the beam."

Which was what David did, straight off the track but not before his transponder had been registered a 10th of a second before Cairoli's.

Jobe and Philippaerts clicked from day one. "We go testing in Belgium every week, always looking to improve the bike yet further," enthuses David. "Hard work wins championships," insists the five-time champ, "and David is a worker. He is not afraid to go out testing, while others are resting or licking their wounds. That can make the difference in September!"

The possibility of switching to MX1 had already been raised in May. "I have a 450 at home and it is very easy for me – my height [six foot one], my weight [11-and-a-half stone], my style, they all speak for me in MX1 and I am already strong enough. Of course I thought about it but I don't think it was the solution to change classes in the middle of the season.

"First I had to find the solution and be successful again in MX2, win the title and then go to MX1. And now I am winning. I still believe it is possible. One day Pourcel must also have a problem, just by the law of averages. Perhaps his bike will break, perhaps he will crash. And if he has a bad day then there are so many good riders that he can soon be pushed out of the top six. I just have to keep on winning."

And good news for Youthstream and the fans is David's resolve to stay in Europe. "I am not interested in supercross. I look to Everts. He is a GP rider through and through, he likes outdoor tracks and he is nine times world champion, soon 10. For sure there is big money to be earned in America but you have to beat the Americans on their tracks to earn it. And there is also good money to be earned at the GPs in Europe if you are good enough.

"I look up to Everts for his person, for his relationship with the fans, for his riding style, everything. And my style is more like Everts – I like to ride long gears, not shifting every two seconds. I don't like America. I am Italian, I like Italy, I like Europe and I like the GPs!"

WALKER'S WORLD

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PACK UP!

In the second part of his noise special, the Marshfield Mouth presents his tailpipe packing masterclass and then takes a look at a selection of apres-market mufflers...

Words by Geoff Walker Photos by Suttly

AS DISCUSSED last month, problems with noise are a real and deadly serious issue surrounding our sport. So this month we've put together a guide to keeping your sparkly four-popper from being a noise pest and keeping tracks open all around the UK!

Okay, so our guide to quiet pipes is based on four-strokes but there are pipes available for the two-stroke market which will make your stroker even quieter and more user-friendly! And while the repacking directions shown are on a four-stroke tailpipe the principles are the same for two-stroke tailpipes.

The packing in your tailpipe can last up to 20 hours but you should really try and keep to a schedule of repacking every 10-12 hours to keep everything tip top. If your bike is jetted perfectly and you are riding in dry conditions your packing will last longer but things rarely run this sweet.

Rich jetting will ruin the packing as it will coat it with unburned gasses, making the bike louder and slower. Riding in mud will also burn the packing faster as the damp affects the packing and the body of the tailpipe will run hotter as it gets caked in mud, making everything get a little too hot.

The packing I have chosen for the CRF Dawg Machine is hot off the delivery dude from the troops at Rush Racing. The FMF wrap around packing is pretty simple to use (which I like) and makes for a good even wrap and good quality sound absorption.

There are lots of packing materials available from FMF as well as pretty much all the pipe manufacturers and instructions for repacking vary slightly depending on the manufacturer. I do realise this fact but I reckon that showing this simple repack on the Factory 4.1 pipe will get you technical legends into your garages and repacking like pros...

Toolbox

You will need...

The tools required for this job on the CRF's 4.1 are 10mm T-bar, 8mm T-bar, spring puller or pliers, a sharp blade, 4mm Allen key, wire brush, contact cleaner, silicone sealant, Loctite, masking tape, a rubber mallet and a vice if available.

pic:01 Remove the side panel and take off the tailpipe making sure everything is clean and you keep a note of all the places each nut and bolt goes.

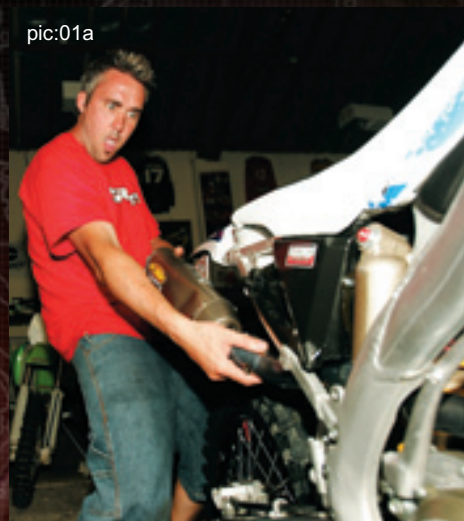
pic:02 If there is a mid-pipe like on the 4.1 then remove the springs and take note of the position it will be replaced in.

pic:03 At this stage I place the pipe into the vice and undo the retaining bolts from the bottom end of the pipe.

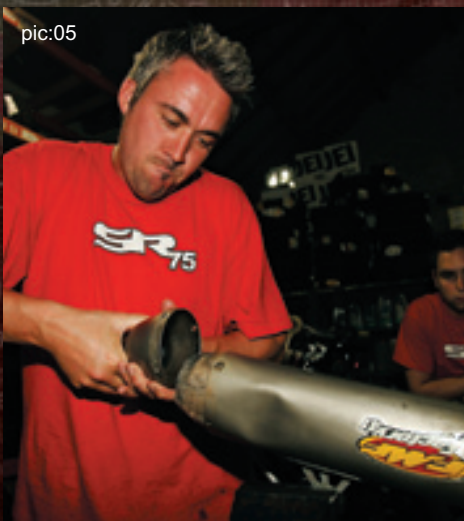
pic:01



pic:01a



pic:05



pic:06



pic:09



pic:010



pic:04 The bottom end-can will be secured with silicon. I take a blade and gently run it around the inside of the fitting surfaces to loosen the silicon's grip.

pic:05 The end-cap can then be removed. Try to remove by gently pulling and rocking the part - remember, easy does it. If this doesn't work then gently tap the end-cap with the rubber mallet to loosen. If the cap is still stubborn you can heat the area where the silicon is spread to loosen its grip, this should

make it come apart easily. When the cap is removed clean the old silicon off.

pic:06 The core is easily removed at this stage. Clean all crud off the core using a wire brush if necessary and some contact cleaner.

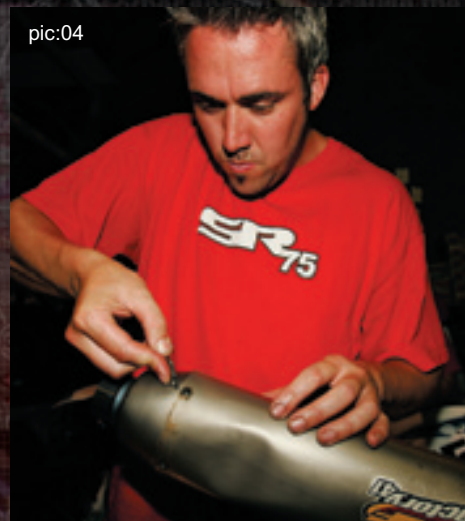
pic:07 Place the packing on the bench and start to wrap the packing around the core as shown. For the 4.1 I had to remove around two inches of the packing sheet to get it to fit inside the body. This is a little bit of trial and error but you



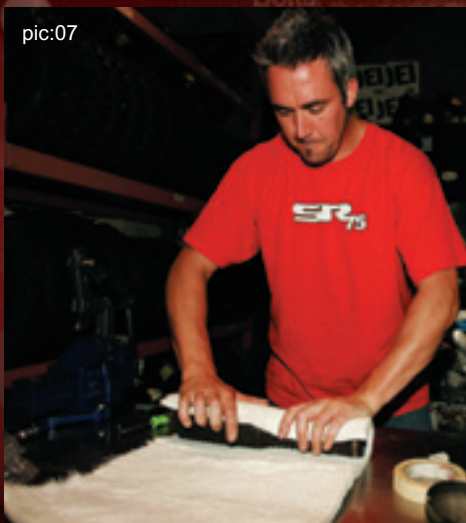
pic:02



pic:03



pic:04



pic:07



pic:08



pic:08a



pic:010a



pic:011



pic:012

will soon learn the ins and outs of your own pipe when you get into the process. Do not wrap too tightly as this will not muffle the sound correctly.

pic:08 Masking tape can now be used to wrap around the packing to make the fitting into the body pretty easy. The masking tape is porous and will not melt to the body with the heat – it'll just burn off and turn dry. Gently slide the core and packing into the body making sure to tuck the packing in at every stage. The core must fit

into place on the top end-cap – if it doesn't the bottom end-cap will not fit into place.

pic:09 At this stage the silicone can be applied to the fitting surface of the end-cap and the end-cap slid or gently tapped into place. Make sure at this point that the end is being fitted the correct way up to match the fitting bracket – get it wrong and you'll feel really stupid!

pic:010 Loctite the bolts in place and tighten so they are snug.

pic:011 A good way to seal the excess silicone is to lick your finger and slowly spread the silicone around and into the gap between the body and the bottom end-cap. Leave the silicone neat for a pro finish.

pic:012 Check all other fixings along the entire pipe and if all is groovy, refit the tailpipe into place, pop your side panel back on and go riding safe in the knowledge that you bike is running better and you're helping the sport to survive!



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BUYER'S GUIDE

Quiet four-stroke exhaust systems

NOW YOU'LL all be aware that I've been barking on about noisy four-strokes for some time now so to help all you four-popper racers to do your bit to keep our sport running smoothly I've pulled together this quiet pipes buyer's guide.

As you can see there's a range of different pipes available to suit all pockets and tastes. And don't worry if you've just bought a 96db pipe and you still wanna do your bit – most of the manufacturers listed below have sound killing bolt-on end-caps or inserts that are available to buy from your local dealer.

HGS 92db Silencer

This pipe is specifically developed for Hardcore Racing by HGS and lowers sound levels to around 92db. Performance wise it has the added advantage of delivering smooth tractable power while retaining good amounts of over-rev.

Price: £270

Supplier: mxpower.org.uk

01487 813755



DEP Pipes Hush Silencer

Britain's number one motocross pipe producer are doing their bit to deal with the noise issue with their 94db Hush Silencer.

Price: £216.12 + VAT

Supplier: deppipes.com

CI Sport 01372 378000



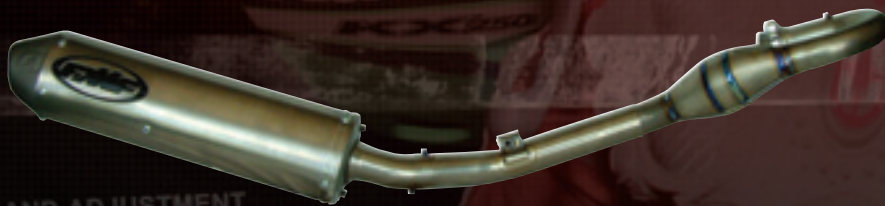
Scorpion Titanium and Stainless Steel Exhaust

While they may not be the most stylish looking exhausts on the market there's no denying that Scorpion have got it right when it comes to delivering a high quality product at a good price. The Scorpion Ti and SS versions come with 92db inserts and are designed to boost power and throttle response.

Price: Titanium £269.99

Stainless Steel £219.99

Supplier: ultimatepursuits.co.uk



FMF Racing Ti Q Silencer

The 93db Ti Q features titanium construction for strength and durability and weighs less than most motocross silencers.

Price: £376

Supplier: rushracing.co.uk

01404 549646



Bill's Pipes Thunder Series

The Bills Thunder Series exhaust system is designed to maximize the performance your bike delivers while keeping the noise levels low. All Thunder Series pipes come with both 92 and 96db inserts as standard and are made from lightweight 6063 aluminum with CNC-machined billet end-caps.

Price: £229.99

Supplier: ultimatepursuits.co.uk

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| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---------|-------------|------|------------|----------|-----------|------|-------|----------|-----------|------|--------------|--------|-----------|------|-------|
| APRILIA | SVX 450/550 | 2006 | FROM £3799 | HONDA | CRF 250 | 2007 | £4699 | KAWASAKI | KX 85 S/W | 2007 | FOR | SUZUKI | RM 125 | 2006 | £3199 |
| APRILIA | RKV 450/550 | 2006 | FROM £3499 | HONDA | CRF 450 | 2007 | £4899 | KAWASAKI | KX 85 B/W | 2007 | BEST | YAMAHA | YZ 125 | 2007 | £3999 |
| HONDA | CRF150 S/W | 2007 | £2999 | KAWASAKI | KX 65 | 2006 | £1799 | KAWASAKI | KX 125 | 2007 | PRICE | YAMAHA | YZ 250F | 2006 | £3999 |
| HONDA | CRF150 B/W | 2007 | £3199 | KAWASAKI | KX 85 S/W | 2006 | £1899 | KAWASAKI | KX 250 | 2007 | ALL IN STOCK | YAMAHA | YZ 250 LC | 2007 | £3999 |
| HONDA | CR 125 | 2007 | £3899 | KAWASAKI | KX 250 | 2006 | £3299 | KAWASAKI | KX 250F | 2007 | IN STOCK | YAMAHA | WR 250F | 2006 | £3499 |
| HONDA | CR 250 | 2007 | £3999 | KAWASAKI | KX 65 | 2007 | PHONE | KAWASAKI | KX 450F | 2007 | IN STOCK | | | | |

USED STOCK: This is just a small selection we have over 200 in stock...

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|-------|--------|-------|---------------|----------|----------|-------|---------------|--------|-----------|-------|---------------|--------|----------|-------|----------------|
| HONDA | CR85 | 00-02 | X2 FROM £1999 | HONDA | XR400 | 2003 | £2699 | KTM | SX 85 B/W | 04-05 | X4 FROM £1499 | SUZUKI | DRZ400 E | 01-03 | X4 FROM £2199 |
| HONDA | CR125 | 94-05 | X7 FROM £1299 | KAWASAKI | KX85 B/W | 04-05 | X3 FROM £1499 | KTM | SX125 | 01-05 | X4 FROM £1999 | YAMAHA | YZ125 | 99-06 | X10 FROM £1599 |
| HONDA | CR250 | 97-06 | X8 FROM £1699 | KAWASAKI | KX125 | 99-06 | X5 FROM £1799 | KTM | SX 200 | 2004 | £2399 | YAMAHA | YZ250 | 03-05 | X8 FROM £2299 |
| HONDA | CRF250 | 2006 | X2 FROM £2799 | KAWASAKI | KX250F | 04-06 | X3 FROM £2399 | KTM | SX350 | 2003 | £2399 | YAMAHA | YZ250F | 02-05 | X12 FROM £2199 |
| HONDA | CRF450 | 03-05 | X6 FROM £2399 | KAWASAKI | KX250 | 02-06 | X8 FROM £1999 | KTM | EXC450 | 03-04 | X4 FROM £2999 | YAMAHA | YZF450 | 03-06 | X4 FROM £2499 |
| HONDA | CRF450 | 2006 | £3599 | KAWASAKI | KX450F | 06 | £3499 | SUZUKI | RM125 | 01-05 | X6 FROM £1899 | YAMAHA | WR 250F | 01-04 | X4 FROM £2199 |
| HONDA | XR250 | 01-03 | X3 FROM £2299 | KAWASAKI | KDX 220 | 2003 | £2299 | SUZUKI | RM 250 | 02-05 | X5 FROM £1999 | YAMAHA | WR 450F | 2004 | X2 FROM £2999 |



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FMF Racing Q2 Silencer

FMF claim to be the pioneer of quiet performance silencers and to have raised the bar with the Q2. It's a completely new design that's engineered for maximum performance while maintaining a sound level near to 93db.

Price: £298

Supplier: rushracing.co.uk
01404 549646



Walker's Big Banger

Milk it...

I've heard some strange tech tips in my time but this one from Nick from Burton on Trent is so freaky I had to ask around until I found someone to confirm that it actually does work – which apparently it does...

'Punctures! We all have 'em, we all hate 'em! The solution? Milk! It won't cure a three inch pinch flat but if you manage to get a thorn or something vastly annoying through your tube, milk will seal up the hole and you won't even know the thorn existed.

'Before inflating your tube with the compressor (lazy git!) get a good 'fashioned hand pump and fill the barrel with milk. Pump this into the tube and then repeat two to three times. The milk will congeal inside the tube but not solidify so when you spin up the back wheel and rip the pesky thorn from the realms of your tube the milk will be forced into the puncture due to the pressure in the tube and solidify, sealing your tube for another weekend round your beloved local track!

'Hope you pass this info on because we all know how annoying it is to turn up at your local track and then have to go home again because you forgot a spare tube or tyre levers – it's a big waste of a day's riding and is endlessly frustrating after paying a whole 20 English pounds for two laps of riding.'

So there you have it – a tip top gold top tip and no mistake! For a chance to win a Big Bang Hour Meter of your very own email your top tech tips to me at geoffwalkerdbr@aol.com or post 'em off to Big Banger Top Tech Tips, DBR, 12 Victoria Street, Morecambe, Lancs LA4 4AG. Failing that you can buy one by giving Baseline a bell on 01306 889911.



FMF Racing Factory 4.1 Silencer

The Factory 4.1 is FMF's premier performance exhaust system. The silencer when used on its own pumps out an FIM legal 96db but when paired with the MegaBomb front pipe and quiet insert keeps the bike's noise level in the region of 92db while still increasing the machine's overall power output.

Price: from £592

Supplier: rushracing.co.uk
01404 549646



Pro Circuit Ti-4 GP system

This all-new Ti silencer is available for all 250 and 450 four-stroke bikes and is the same exhaust that Ricky Carmichael and James Stewart run on their works weapons. Probably the trickiest thing on these pipes is the quiet end-caps and inserts which keep the noise levels low but the bling levels high.

Price: Exhaust system £595

Billet end-caps £60 Stainless £45

Supplier: pro-circuit-racing.co.uk
01283 500450



Pro Circuit 496 Silencer

Pro Circuit's quietest four-stroke silencer is claimed to keep your bike's noise levels in the low 90s while still increasing horsepower levels over the stock unit.

Price: £325

Supplier: pro-circuit-racing.co.uk
01283 500450



GOT A BIKE PREP PROBLEM?

For the Walker way around it write to Geoff c/o DBR at the usual address or email him at

Geoffwalkerdbr@aol.com

Each month's ☆ star letter will receive a bunch of Surfing Life swag. If you fancy some Surfing Life stuff as worn by the likes of Carl Nunn, Paul Edmondson and Tommy Church but didn't manage to write the star letter then check out their website at www.surfinglifestore.com

profile

*Deal or no deal?
Thankfully for Whibs it's
the first one!*

LOOKING UP!

He started the year without a team but now Paul Whibley is Honda's top man in the US GNCC series with the podium in his sights...

Words and photos by Jonty Edmunds



AT THE start of the year things weren't looking good for Paul Whibley. With little idea of what '06 was going to bring following a disappointing '05 WEC campaign as a semi factory-backed Gas Gas rider, the only thing that was certain for Whibs was that he was determined to once again leave his New Zealand home and compete against the best off-road racers in the world.

The problem was that picking up the right deal – in fact, picking up any deal – looked doubtful following his mediocre results.

As the new season drew ever closer the friendly Kiwi found himself in a position feared by all professional racers – just weeks away from the start of the new season he had no deals on the table and no idea of where he was going to race. After four years in Europe it looked as if Paul's time on the road had come to an end.

"Things certainly didn't work out the way I had planned last year," admits Paul, thinking back to the '05 WEC series. "I was really happy with the effort that Gas Gas UK were putting into my racing in Britain but I was a little disappointed with the effort the factory was putting into my world championship bikes. I certainly don't hold anything against them – it's just the way things worked out – but having a

poor season like that certainly meant that there wasn't too much interest in me for this year."

Despite having hoped to return to the base he had made for himself in the UK and compete in the WEC once again it seemed as if he would be forced to spend the year at home, thousands of miles away from where he wanted to be racing.

"At the end of last year I was looking for a ride in Europe again but nothing appealing came along," admits Paul. "I have always wanted to come and race in the US so I put a little more effort into finding a ride in the States. Initially I didn't find anything as not many people knew who I was. It was really late to be looking for a ride which also didn't help. Things certainly weren't looking good."

But just when Paul thought he wasn't going to find a deal anywhere he got in touch with five-time US GNCC champion and friend Scott Summers and things immediately started to look a little brighter. With Summers toying with the idea of putting a team together Whibs seemed, for the first few months of '06 at least, to have found a ride.

"I've known Scott Summers for a few years and we got talking. He explained that he might be putting a team together this season but that nothing was certain. If I wanted to come over

and do a few races then he would support me and we'd take things from there. Initially the deal was just to do the first four or five GNCC races which wasn't ideal but it was the only solid offer I had."

Arriving at the first round of the GNCC series in Florida having spent just a few weeks trying to adjust to his 450cc Honda, Whibs knew he wouldn't be competitive. He also knew that if his part-time ride was going to develop into a season-long deal he needed results. Far from being as fit as he could have been, on a bike he wasn't completely comfortable with and riding in a series unfamiliar to him, Paul finished the first round in 16th position.

"It was hard in Florida because I was in at the deep end. I wasn't as bike fit as I should have been, wasn't really used to racing three hours and didn't have the bike set-up that good. I needed to do well but I just wanted to get that first race under my belt and then work hard and try and get stronger results at the following rounds of the series."

In his typically laidback way Whibs didn't make excuses for his less than impressive result at the Orange Crush GNCC, instead he headed off to round two and again aimed simply to do his best. With conditions suiting him better Paul placed sixth and was one

After a shaky start the Kiwi's starting to make his presence felt!





of the fastest riders on the track during the dying stages of the race. He might not have finished on the podium but he'd proved to himself, team manager Summers and his rivals that he was a much better rider than his round one result suggested.

"I felt good at round two," recalls Paul, "but those events weren't my first time racing in the US – nobody remembered that I'd raced there before though. I first raced in the US in '01. Geoff Ballard in Australia put me in touch with Fred Bramlet who was Scott Summers's mechanic at the time and I came over and stayed with Scott. I did a couple of GNCC events on a 250cc Honda."

The reason no-one remembered the Kiwi was because his results, by his own admission, had been "crap" when he first dipped his toe into the GNCC racing pool. "I had some bike problems in the races that I was doing quite well in so I didn't have much to show in the way of results. I was using one of Mike LaRocco's practice bikes the first time I raced in the US – looking back it wasn't really the best bike to be riding for three hours in the woods. I didn't know a good cross-country set-up then. My best finish was just outside the top 10 but in one of the races I was second at the end of the first lap before a coolant drain bolt came out and the bike fried itself."

As the '06 GNCC series has worked its way up the East Coast of the States people have

certainly started to take notice of Whibs second time around. With top 10 finishes at rounds three and four Paul has been regularly finishing as not only the best placed four-stroke rider but also as the best placed Honda rider.

"I wanted to finish inside the top 10 and hopefully the top five in the series," he admits. "That was my goal at the beginning of the series but having not raced in the US for such a long time I had no idea how I would stack up against the riders in the States. I finished 16th at the first race having only spent a few weeks trying to set-up my race bike so I figured that top 10 would be a realistic goal for me to try and achieve. At the second round I finished sixth which made me have a re-think. I guess having spent a little more time on a bike really helped me because I was much more comfortable on it. I knew that that finishing top five in the series was achievable."

One thing Paul has had to adjust to in the US is racing on a four-stroke. After several seasons on a 250cc two-stroke in Europe he is the only front runner campaigning a thumper in the GNCC series now that KTM's Mika Lafferty is out injured. "I really like riding a four-stroke although I think that the US GNCC series probably suits a two-stroke more which is why so many riders are still on them."

"A four-stroke is what I have to ride so there is no point in even thinking about a two-stroke. I actually have the choice of two bikes – the 450

that I was racing at the start of the season and now a 270cc. I seem to have pretty good speed on the grass track sections of the events which I think is a lot to do with having spent time in Europe but I'm not the fastest guy in the tighter wooded sections."

"I think that has a lot to do with the 450 being a little heavier and more powerful than the smaller bikes. The idea in developing the 270 was to see if I could sacrifice some power on the open sections of the courses while having a lighter bike in the trees. I really like the bike and it is definitely easier to ride in the trees."

As Paul adjusts to a more manageable woods machine he knows that the final four rounds of this year's US GNCC series are going to be hugely important for him. Having started the season as a relative nobody, hard work, determination and the support of Summers has seen Whibs work his way up to fifth in the championship.

"Scott is a great guy to ride for and really laidback as a team manager," comments Whibley on one of the most respected former champions in the history of the GNCC series. "He gets the job done and knows what is what because he used to race himself. If there is anything that needs sorting we talk about it and come up with a solution. I guess he has raced and been around the GNCC series for as long as anyone and knows the tracks well. Although we like our bikes set-up very differently he



knows what will work well for me."

For Whibbs staying focused on a serious end-of-season push is the most important thing at present. "I always wanted to finish on the podium at some point this year," admits Paul. "Like every rider I'd love to be winning but I knew that was going to be difficult. I feel that I have made definite steps forward as the series has progressed. I'm learning the tracks, setting up the bike better and each week we are making little improvements. I have two goals for the last four races of the season – to finish fifth or higher in the championship and to get at least one podium. It won't be easy because every rider will raise their game for the end of the year but I am confident that I can do it."

So what of the future? Having initially wanted to race in Europe does Paul still want to return to the WEC? "Part of me definitely wishes that I'd come to the US a little earlier to race. Obviously I have raced here before, looking back it would have been nice if things had come together and I'd been able to stay here. Saying that, my time spent in the UK and Europe taught me a lot."

"I'm not sure what I'll be doing next year but I want to continue racing in the US and things are looking a lot better than they were at the end of last season. I'm happy with the way things are with Honda but I'll just see how things go. I'd like to stay here in the US for the rest of my career if I can."



profile

With friend, team boss and GNCC legend Scott Summers

Bigger, better, brighter!

Scott Summers on the changing face of GNCC racing

"When I first got involved in GNCC racing it was just a big bunch of pick-up trucks out in a field and a bunch of guys that loved racing their dirt bikes."

"Today the series has outgrown a lot of places that I used to race at simply because there's not enough space there for the motorhomes and big team trucks and way more riders. In a lot of ways the sport has come on a long way in recent years. I think it's at the level that US motocross was at 10 years ago. We can probably look at what they are doing now and have some idea of what the GNCC series will be like in 10 years."

"Everybody takes it more seriously nowadays and the level of professionalism is much higher, mainly because of the money involved due to sponsorship. I don't think there are any more spectators today because the sport struggles to deliver what so many other sports can give in terms of continued entertainment because of the 10 or 12-mile courses."

"As a racer you definitely have to take things more seriously if you want to be competitive because there are a lot of guys who are well prepared, both physically and mechanically. I was lucky in my era because I was one of the first riders to take the fitness aspect of the sport very seriously. I never felt like I was the fastest guy on the track but I never got tired like a lot of my competitors did."

"If you take different areas like decision making during the week, decision making during the race, diet, total level of fitness, ability to test and then improve and set-up their bike – all these different things – each rider will be really good at one thing but not so good at the next. At the end of three hours there may be five or six guys that are all within seconds of each other. If any one rider was perfect in every area then they would win each and every race by at least 10 minutes but it just isn't that way."

"Juha is better at most things than most riders this year and it's up to the other riders to work out why. What is it that he is doing that is so right? It is a very complex sport which makes it great. At the end of the week the race is your report card which tells you how well you did in all the different areas."

"I think the series will continue to get more popular because people who ride bikes can relate to it. The guys doing well at these races are helping to sell parts which means that companies will want to keep involved in the series and pour sponsorship money into it."

**Defending AMCA 125cc
champ Brad O'Leary's
looking for title #2 in '06**



REIGN MAN?

After realising his championship dream in '05, is a successful defence of his title on the cards for AMCA 125cc king Brad O'Leary?

Words and photos by Mike Wood

AFTER FINISHING as runner-up in both 2003 and '04, Brad O'Leary finally secured the prize he was so desperately chasing when he clinched last year's AMCA 125cc championship title.

Along the way the 23-year-old Rugby-based rider has certainly ruffled a few feathers with his no-nonsense, all-action style. But whether you consider Brad to be a hero or villain the reality is that he is a totally determined, talented rider who gives 100 per cent in everything he does – be it racing, training or bike preparation.

After starting racing as a six-year-old it was 1999 when Brad made his AMCA debut with his first championship ride coming at the Bevercotes event in May 2000. Despite missing two rounds that year he still managed a total haul of 44 points which was just enough to squeeze into 15th place in the final championship table which guaranteed a place on the startline for the 2001 series.

But due to the Foot and Mouth crisis there was to be no AMCA title chase in 2001 so it

was on to 2002 – the year that Brad announced his arrival as a title contender. For '02 ex-AMCA and IMBA champ Richard Main – who first got a young Brad riding on a 50cc Malaguti – took O'Leary under his wing as part of a three-man Honda squad alongside Jonathan Slesser and Karl Smith.

Brad earned his first ever championship moto win during that year and also his first overall but it was his Main Racing team-mate Slesser who was leading the championship at the final round at Bromsberrow. And it was Brad who won the title for Jon by crucially passing Simon Lane on the last lap of the final moto after Slesser had crashed out, evening out the points totals for the pair and allowing Slesser to take home the crown by virtue of a winning-more-motos tie-breaker.

Brad also made his debut in the IMBA 125cc European championship that season and finished as the top British rider in sixth overall.

After an early season shoulder injury Brad still had a chance of winning the '03 crown as

the series came down to the final round but his hopes were dashed by a seized motor. So Slesser retained his title but Brad had done enough to seal second. In the IMBA championship Brad recorded his first moto wins during the British round at Bridgnorth and finally finished seventh overall in the Euro table.

The following season was a case of close but no cigar for O'Leary as he took the silver medal again in the AMCA 125cc championship and also finished second overall in the prestigious IMBA series. Just as he had in '03, Brad started the campaign with a moto win but a mechanical breakdown at Shobdon at round two and a injured wrist following a crash at Matchams restricted his points scoring. But in between he scorched to a brilliant hat-trick at Culham although this was not enough to prevent the superb Gary Davies from claiming a remarkable 11th AMCA title.

The IMBA series mirrored the domestic championship and Brad was unfortunate to come up against Belgian star Bengt Laeremans

who dominated, winning a whopping 16 out of the 19 motos held!

So, after twice being the AMCA runner-up, Brad finally got the reward his efforts deserved by taking the title in 2005. But it wasn't plain sailing – a DNF in moto two at the opening round at Enmore thanks to a damaged rear brake hose saw to that. But like all true champs he put the setback behind him and got on with the job in hand.

The season developed into a two-way title fight with Lancastrian Rick Du-Feu before the destination of the crown was decided in one dramatic moment during moto two of the sixth round at Culham. O'Leary and Du-Feu went for the same line entering a corner, Du-Feu bit out and dislocated his shoulder and, after playing catch-up to his rival since round one, Brad moved into the series lead with just the final round at Charnock to come. And at a very wet meeting Brad steered his Honda to a safe second overall – good enough for that long-awaited title.

For most of the season he was also well in contention for the 125cc IMBA European title – battling with eventual winner Du-Feu and Dutchman Herman Hylkema – but had to settle for bronze.

After six years on Honda machinery Brad decided to go orange for 2006 thanks to AMS Motorcycles of Cheltenham. "The relationship with KTM is awesome – Mark and James from AMS have taken me under their experienced wing and shown great faith in my ability.

"Although I've gathered new sponsors this year I've mostly remained loyal to the people that have helped me from the beginning. And I would also definitely not have made progress without that vital support – both financial and moral – from my mum and dad. Relationships I build are for the long term.

"The very top sponsorship deals seem to have never come my way but 2006 has fallen into place. I have a great friend in Russell at FotoX.co.uk who's raised my profile, gathering more new sponsors and building my website."

Since winning the title Brad appears to be far more relaxed in his approach to racing. "These days I would rather back off the throttle and go home safe as points win championships not DNFs." And he's got a point! So far this season Brad's finished on the podium at all three home championship rounds and trails leader Mark Hooley by just 20 points. And after four rounds of his IMBA championship quest the KTM rider holds third overall, a mere six points behind second-placed Czech Michal Votroubek – although, admittedly, he's 106 points off leader Hylkema.

But despite the deficit there's still three rounds to come including his home round at Branston in Staffordshire on August 6. With a maximum 180 points available the title is still up for grabs and Brad's confident he's got what it takes.

"I feel that at present I'm only racing at 90 per cent and if I produce that extra 10 per cent needed I can still give myself a great chance of winning both titles."



Brad's switched to a KTM this season after six years on Hondas





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Prima Italia!

Possibly the most one-sided MXdN in the event's history, Jack looks back to 1986 and Maggiora in Italy - the year the Yanks spanked the motocross world...

Words and photos by Jack Burnicle

AN URGENT email from Italy... 'Ciao Jack. I hope you remember me. My name is Edoardo Pacini. I'm the editor of the Italian monthly Motocross since 2003.'

How could I have forgotten the amiable 'Al' Pacini, top notch MX snapper of the 1990s?

'I need your help to get a very important story about Maggiora 1986, the fantastic edition of the Italian MX of Nation. 1986 - 2006. The Nation 20 years later. To do that I need photos. You have it?'

Too right I have! Time to fumble once more through my increasingly deranged photography files.

Possibly the most spectacularly remembered MX des of all time, the 40th edition rolled into Maggiora - a vast, fast but tricky gorge of theatrical grandeur carved out of mountainous foothills north east of Milan - in September '86.

America returned to its old armada, an all Honda US squad similar to those that dominated both Trophee and Motocross des Nations in 1981 and '82. Johnny O'Mara, a surviving member of the original 1981 conquest, joined David Bailey (ever-present since his last-minute call-up in 1982) and relative rookie Ricky Johnson, already a folk hero in Paris Bercy.

They formed an awesome squad. Bailey beat Johnson to the 500 AMA national title by six points with O'Mara fourth and in both 250 nationals and the AMA supercross series they'd finished 1-2-3 in the order Johnson, Bailey and Johnny O!

Lined up against them were regular contenders like Belgium, Great Britain, the Netherlands, Sweden, Finland and host nation Italy. Plus utter no-hopers like Hong Kong's Yamaha-mounted trio of Kim Cheng Tai (500), Hon Lan Kwong (250) and, er, David McKirdy (125)!

The genuine Irish article had somehow travelled all the way crammed - men, boys, machines and two metre tall Gordie McCann - into William Burgess's van.

A massive entry of 24 countries made it impossible to run three straight races as inaugurated at Gaildorf in 1985. The FIM jury decided on two races for each rider - 125 versus 250 in the first, 125 versus 500 in the second and 250 versus 500 in the third. Each race was to start with 24 riders on the front row and their team-mates lined up behind but only the best four of six results to count.

Britain's double world 500 champion Dave Thorpe (Honda) was joined by fourth-placed 250 GP star Jem Whatley - guaranteed crowd support just up the road from his Cagiva factory - and the Bubba Stewart of his generation, 17-year-old Kawasaki-mounted 125 sensation Rob Herring.

Both Thorpey and ex-500 world champ Hakan Carlqvist claimed that Maggiora was a 250 track, the turns at the back tight for leveraging an open-classer round. Bailey and O'Mara agreed!

Omens were already ominous for the top Europeans.



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BRAVE DAVE THORPE
FLIES ON TO THE
FINISHING STRAIGHT
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OF THE AMERICANS.



ALAN MORRISON (IRELAND)
ON HIS 125 KAWASAKI!



JOHNNY O WONDER!
IF IT WASN'T A
DREAM AFTER HIS
TUMBLING GCSN
RACE RIDE

was armed with his mum's Kodak Brownie camera. After art college he mixed life as a graphic designer, magazine art director, photographer and part-time art college tutor with motocross and photo-journalism. Now he's a commentator, painting pictures with words. He never did get a proper job...

JACK BURNICLE is the godfather (our words, not his) of British MX Journalism. Born in Billingham, County Durham, to Bella and nutty (his words, not ours) musical genius Stan Burnicle, Jack was mad about cars and motor racing as a kid. At sweet 16 he got a motorbike, rode it to a local 'scramble' and was instantly, hopelessly hooked. Next time he went he

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L TO R: JOHNSON, O'MARA, BAILEY APPLAUD NICHES RINALDI (CENTRE) WITH HIS ITALIAN TEAM-MATE MASSIMO CONTINI. T. CORRADO MADDII



O'MARA'S ASTONISHING 2ND RACE RIDE. MX DES NATIONS MAGGIORA 1986 (125 HONDA)

Holland, runners-up in '85, had lost Kees van der Ven and newly-crowned 125 world champ Dave Strijbos through injury. Belgian hero Andre Malherbe had announced his sudden retirement after narrowly losing the 500 title to Thorpe and France were without their newly-crowned and first-ever world champ, Jacky Vimond.

The USA drew the coveted inside berth for the charge into Maggiora's wide, 180 degree first turn. Craftily, O'Mara's 125 occupied the front line with Johnson's 250 astern and slightly to his left. When the gate dropped Johnny moved right allowing 'RJ' a clear spring up the inside.

It worked a treat as Johnson holedshot with O'Mara third behind Frenchman Christian Vimond (Honda) and ahead of inspirational Italian folk hero Michele Rinaldi (Suzuki), Dutchman John van den Berk (Yamaha), Finn Pekka Vehkonen (Yamaha) and Jem Whatley, all on 250s. Poor Rob Herring, flattened by a runaway Yamaha, scorched down the huge start and finish straight 34th behind Serge Krack (honest!) of Luxembourg.

Within two laps the Yanks had gone, Rinaldi had the fans screaming in third and with his pint-sized compatriot Massimo Contini (Cagiva) fighting through to 11th and second 125 (therefore counting just two points as each class scored separately), Italy lay a good third ahead of Sweden, Finland and the Netherlands with the Brits a terrible tenth.

And it was even worse for Belgium, winner of the Trophée des Nations here in 1980, who lost both Eric Geboers (125 Honda) and Jo Martens (250 Husqvarna) with broken chains!

O'Mara had been fired just before the MX

des after six seasons with Honda America.

"I was hurt and I was angry," admits the O'Show. "I didn't want to leave Honda. So I went to Maggiora with something big on my mind." He didn't even confide this shocking news to best mate Bailey until Saturday night before the race in Italy. "He was devastated," says O'Mara. Bailey already harboured his own point to prove. "Johnson had such a dominant year in '86 that I was sick of him getting all the attention," smiles David. "I really wanted to carry the team and win there. The track was one of the most spectacular I'd ever seen. It just knocked my socks off at first glance. I couldn't wait to ride on it!"

Thorpe knew the Americans well. He had tested in Japan with Bailey and O'Mara and was a big fan. "And from the moment practice started I was so impressed with Johnson," admits DT. He had plenty of time to watch. The Brits, to Whatley's annoyance, never practised in the same session!

Race two pitched Thorpe into the fray. While Bailey holedshot and built up a 10-second winning margin in the 14-lap, 36-minute moto, Thorpe lost precious time clawing past Belgian Georges Jobe (Kawasaki) and determined Dutchman Gert-Jan van Doorn (Honda). It took him five laps to reach second place by which time O'Mara had leapt from 11th to sixth, though you'd hardly call the people he was passing icons of the 500 GP class. Guadenz Gisler (Switzerland), Giovanni Cavatorta (San Marino - Italy's second-string team!), Corrado Maddii (Italy) and Kurt Lungqvist (Finland) all fell to the flying Honda.

But then the O'Show set about the real

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HERRING (125 KAWASAKI), MX DES NATIONS, ITALY, '86

deal, picking off ex-world champions Heinz Kinigadner (Austria), Carlqvist and Georges Jobe, the latter conveniently crashing as he fended off the impish 125.

Uphill the 500s would pull away but elsewhere O'Mara could haul them back. "I really had to pick lines to get the guys on the downhills and in the off-camber turns," recalls Johnny. "With a 125 you have to plan every move."

"To me, Johnny was the best 125 rider ever," reckons Rick Johnson. "The way he applied power. At Maggiora he was driving deep into the corners and railing turns harder than anybody. He pushed the hell out of me through the entire first race. He was trying to prove to Honda that they let the wrong man go!"

For three laps O'Mara terrorised Thorpe, who was suffering rear brake problems and struggling to stop on the steep, fast plunges. Finally, on lap 10, he cut inside the bellowing 500. David bravely retaliated and passed right back. "I thought, oh ****," says O'Mara. "But I was able to get him back on an adverse-cambered section two turns later."

Johnny gradually pulled clear. The crowd went wild. The United States had already won with a perfect 1-1-1 scorecard! "I just never let up," said O'Mara, sitting quietly, slightly bemused, on the rostrum after an epic race. "Annoying," said a sporting, wounded Thorpe, whose team had nonetheless moved up to sixth with Herring 19th overall and seventh 125.

Back in 13th – and third 125 – was a skinny 17-year-old French newcomer called Jean-Michel Bayle on a Kawasaki, the Christophe Pourcel of his era beating the likes of Geboers and Contini.

On the podium Bailey accidentally sprayed champagne in a despondent Thorpe's eyes. He apologised. "Sorry. I didn't mean that." DT, his sense of humour still intact, replied "I know, that's just how my bloody day is going!"

Later, Thorpe was amazed at all the hype. "Bailey and O'Mara were the best riders in the world. That day they beat me. Johnny was astonishingly fast on his 125 and Bailey was just like he looked in those videos. Faultless!"

"The Little Professor", David Bailey volunteered for the second row behind Johnson

for race three. Thorpe holeshot and fought them tenaciously during the early stages. Bailey nabbed the lead on lap two but Johnson couldn't squeeze past the world champion for another three blistering circuits.

Fourth place, in the race of his life, went to Australian Craig Dack (250 Honda) as Whatley glided through from 10th on lap one to fifth on lap eight. Passing Walter Bartolini, Dane Soren Mortensen, Lungqvist, Cavatorta and van Doorn en route, Jem hoisted Great Britain into a superb second overall behind the victorious United States.

High profile retirements included Jobe, Carlqvist, Kinigadner and van den Berk while Italian duo Rinaldi and Maddii gated horribly outside the top 20. Michele recovered heroically to snatch sixth from van Doorn on the final nail-biting lap and rescue third overall for his team from Finland by a single point!

As Johnson and Bailey approached the chequered flag, RJ grabbed David's right wrist and held it aloft and they rolled triumphantly across the line together, a defining moment in America's new-found dominance of world motocross.

The balance of power had irrevocably shifted on that scorching afternoon of September 21st 1986.

Ireland's trio of Alan Morrison, Burgess and Stephen Russell finished a fine 15th. And Hong Kong? They actually weren't last, amazingly ending an extraordinary day 21st ahead of Belgium, Austria and Luxembourg despite poor Kim Chang Tai being lapped seven times in his first outing and eight times in race three!

Bailey was bubbling. "I've enjoyed myself thoroughly," he grinned, dusk descending as he, Johnny O and Johnson signed endless autographs for Italian worshippers. "Our starting technique is good, we had the draw and we had good equipment. When Johnny put in that first race performance on the 125 it made me realise I'd have to perform. We had a lot of confidence and those Belgian breakdowns in the first moto helped.

"What a phenomenal track to ride in front of such a big, enthusiastic crowd. I don't recall riding in front of a bigger crowd outdoors, ever!"

US team manager and Belgian legend

Roger de Coster didn't totally share Bailey's jubilation. "It's sad for the Europeans that we've won so easily," feared 'The Man' that night. "They are fantastic riders as individuals but lack organisation, motivation, everything. Look at the talent in that Belgian team. They made me want to cry today."

In a huge marquee on Sunday evening the Americans received enormous trophies and Bailey grabbed the mic to thank the hosts for their support, organisation and marvellous track. Johnson, already a bit of a linguist at Bercy, whispered in his ear. David laughed. "Prima Italia!" he shouted, triggering off another burst of tumultuous applause.

Later Thorpe launched a bun fight between the British and American tables that ended, after a fierce bombardment, with O'Mara waving the white serviette of surrender.

It was the only time the Yanks looked like being defeated all day!



WHATLEY (GB) SALES DOWNHILL ABOVE VAST ITALIAN CROWD, ON ITALIAN BIKE, TO SNATCH SIXTH PLACE FOR GREAT BRITAIN

ANDREW McFARLANE



Steve Cox is an American moto-journo who follows the entire AMA SX/MX tour. A staffer at famed US weekly Cycle News for over four years before striking out on his own to do the freelance thing, Steve's an ex-pro motocross racer so he can ride as well as write. He knows the sport and its personalities like few others and as our US Editor provides top-level insight and features fresh from the Stateside scene...

SHARK ATTACK!

A practice crash ruined Andrew McFarlane's debut AMA SX season but the former GP star's still confident he can pull it all together outdoors...

WORDS and PHOTOS by Steve Cox



After five years racing GPs
Andrew McFarlane has taken
his talents to America

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A deadly serious racer with a deadly serious nickname, Andrew 'Sharky' McFarlane spent the last five seasons in GPs before heading Stateside to follow in fellow Aussie Chad Reed's footsteps. Reed started his US career with Yamaha of Troy which is where Sharky's kicked off his American campaign.

We sat down with Andrew to talk about the differences between the US and Europe and what it's like being the old dog racing against the young pups.

DBR: You seemed to have decent speed indoors but then you disappeared only a couple of rounds in. What happened?

AM: "Yeah, you know, it was a little bit disappointing. I did Anaheim, went to Phoenix and I was progressing

really good. I spent a lot of time at the Yamaha test track and I did a bunch of work on the bike and I felt it was good enough to have good results. I was starting to feel quite good and then unfortunately I crashed out at Phoenix and didn't get any points there.

"Later that week I crashed at the test track and broke both my big toes and had ligament damage to my right ankle. It was really disappointing because I felt that my supercross season could've been good. I've got good supercross experience but I had five years off from supercross and it took a little bit of time to get back into it.

"Next year I'm looking forward to supercross. I feel good about it and I know that being here in America for a year, I'm going to feel a lot more comfortable."

DBR: Since you raced SX before did you think it would be easier than it was? There's a big difference between AMA SX and SX everywhere else...

AM: "Not necessarily, no. I worked really hard and spent a lot of time at the test track. Having the five years off and doing no supercross whatsoever, it just took me more time than expected to get back into it. But right around Phoenix I started to feel really good and the bike was really good and Brett proved that.

"I know what I have to do for next year to prepare myself and I'm going to do it. I want to have a good supercross season. I really enjoy it and being in America with both supercross and motocross, it mixes it up a lot and it's fun. It's something to look forward to for next year." ♦



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DBR: Some Euro guys think SX is scary. Is that a deserved reputation?

AM: "I mean, I think that there's a lot of people in Europe who say they want to come to America and race but I think at the end of the day you've got to want to do it. That's what I wanted to do. I wanted to come here to America. I raced in Europe for five years and I wanted to come here and race American supercross and motocross."

"Like Ben, I wanted to do it – and I wanted to do it well and be successful – so I just made my decision and I don't think there's any reason to be scared of it. You've got to attack it with confidence. You've got to do a lot of hard work but, all-in-all, I'm motivated and I'm ready to work for it to be successful."

DBR: SX is different here too, right?

AM: "The stadiums are a lot bigger and there's a lot of different variables. I think coming from Australia, we've got a great supercross background, like with Michael Byrne and Chad and myself. I know I've got good supercross skills and I know my riding style and my technique is going to work for supercross, it's just really unfortunate that I got injured. I think 2007 will be a good year for me with the outdoors and SX seasons."

DBR: Do you think you take this sport more seriously than the younger kids you're racing against?

AM: "You know, I guess I'm a serious guy and I know what I have to do to be able to win races. It doesn't come

easy. Sure, I'm a little bit older than some of the guys and they're probably still riding on a little bit of talent and don't realize how much hard work you have to put into this sport. It's a tough sport overall and I'm really motivated to do what I have to do. I don't need a trainer to train and I can do everything myself."

"I think for the outdoors I have a lot of experience and it's a shame I've had a few bad races but I just take every race and every weekend and every day as serious as I possibly can because it's a long series with supercross and motocross. With the outdoors we're only halfway through the season and you have to be there throughout the whole year. Every race counts and every point matters so I'm focused every time I'm on the bike and I'm just happy to be here in America."

"In the short amount of time I've been here I've come a long way with my riding and I've learned a lot and I think it shows that I'm doing my homework and things are working good. I just hope to continue improving until I'm in the top three in the championship."

DBR: I've heard a lot of riders – including Ben Townley – comment that the pace in the US is really a sprint whereas in Europe the riders pace themselves more. Is that true? And how did you adjust?

AM: "Yeah, that's true. I adjusted as a combination of a bunch of things. My training schedule and things I work on during the week. I've made a great bike set-up and I've produced I think a good suspension set-up and a good



Broken toes and ligament damage cut his SX season short

engine and brought the team along quite a lot with my background from Europe. I think that's just a combination of all of those things until you find that final piece that makes it all work like it should."

DBR: What do you want to accomplish in America?

AM: "You know, it doesn't matter where I go I want to win. I'm working the best I possibly can and as a result I'd like to finish in the top three in the outdoors as a stepping stone for next year and I think this year I've adapted quite well. And then, next year, I hope to be on to bigger and better things and I think it will get a lot easier."

DBR: How are the tracks different in Europe to the USA?

AM: "It's hard to say. I think the tracks in Europe are very specific in the way they're laid out and I think that in Europe the last few years they've made the tracks a lot more visible for the spectators and for television. The tracks here are some really great layouts and so far every track has been completely different. Different surfaces, too."

"What I like about the surfaces here in America is they prepare the tracks really well so there's always a lot of moisture in the surface and the way they till the tracks up and make them loamy, it makes for good racing with several different lines in the turns. In Europe that's probably where we struggled with that. There are great things in Europe and some not-so-good things."





TEN OUT OF TEN!

RC heads towards his 10th-straight outdoor title as Bubba bounces back from a catalogue of crashes

WORDS and PHOTOS by Steve Cox

Every year it seems someone is going to step up and stop Ricky Carmichael's utter domination of the AMA Nationals. But since his rookie season in 1997 he has never lost. After three successful 125cc national championships from '97 to '99 he moved to the 250cc class and has been killing them there ever since.

After Washougal – round eight of the 12-round series – he sits more than a full three motos' points ahead of second-placed Chad Reed in the table.

The man that was supposed to beat him this year, James Stewart, has failed to score points in quite a few motos and even when he's racing he can't seem to consistently match Carmichael's speed.

At Unadilla, Carmichael's least favourite track, he turns two good starts (both behind

Honda's Davi Millsaps) into two runaway victories after Stewart takes another hard crash in practice and decides to sit out the race.

"It's not like he got hurt today on some gnarly quad section that he's very creative on," Carmichael says when asked what advice he would give to Stewart. "Unfortunately, he crashed in a really hard spot and I'm sure he was trying to do a fast lap. I think there's a lot going on maybe besides what you guys see at the track. I don't really follow what he does but obviously there's something wrong. The only one that knows what it is is him.

"If I have any advice, I think he needs to do what he wants to do because, in the end, it's him. It's all about him and nobody else. He needs to do what makes him happy. Maybe, if that happens, things will start turning around.

I just feel bad for the guy because, man, he's taking some hard hits and I know when I moved up to the 250 class I was getting tired of it. It hurts.

"It just gets to the point where you get tired of crashing and, hopefully, there isn't going to be that day where you don't get up and walk away from it. That's what I was concerned about. I just had to kind of tighten up and get a better programme."

At the following round in Colorado Millsaps again gets the holeshot both times out but Carmichael doesn't start right behind him this time and it takes him a while to chase down the 18-year-old Georgian. Unfortunately for him, when Carmichael gets behind him he knows he can't beat him.

"Honestly, I just ride as hard as I can for as



long as I can and try not to pump up," Millsaps says. "I tell myself to breathe and when I hear this guy on my butt [motions to Carmichael] I'm like, 'I guess my chance is over'. The second moto I almost KO'd him when he stopped in a corner down there. It was almost a Millsaps/Carmichael pile-up. I stopped for him because he's my buddy and all [laughs]."

RC catches and passes Millsaps in moto one — as does Stewart who returns to race at altitude. In moto two it all happens like moto one except that Stewart fades late in the race for fifth.

"It's always tough coming here," Carmichael says of the race at an altitude over a mile high. "There's a bunch of elements that you have to fight. Number one, elevation, so it obviously takes a toll on the bike as far as power goes. ▶

RC gets on the gas after James Stewart at Washougal



KEVIN WINDHAM

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Fast starting Davi Millsaps leads the pack at the Thriller in Unadilla

Millsaps admits that when he hears RC behind him he knows he's lost a place



SERIES STANDINGS

450F class

| | | |
|----|------------------|------------|
| 1 | Ricky Carmichael | 389 points |
| 2 | Chad Reed | 313 |
| 3 | Davi Millsaps | 269 |
| 4 | Kevin Windham | 261 |
| 5 | Travis Preston | 226 |
| 6 | James Stewart | 211 |
| 7 | David Vuillemin | 206 |
| 8 | Nick Wey | 202 |
| 9 | Timmy Ferry | 178 |
| 10 | Josh Summey | 129 |



We're 22 per cent down on horsepower here. That's a huge difference when you're not turning 800 horsepower. The bikes run a lot hotter so this fuel the AMA has us run, they start overheating. And obviously fitness. I've got to give it up to Aldon Baker [his trainer]. He's pretty smart on altitude stuff. But it's fun to come here to a new venue and the track is good. It's not too one-lined. It's definitely a good racetrack."

Washougal, round eight of the series, sees Stewart's re-emergence as he looks to have overcome his injuries and races at the front of the pack in both motos. Unfortunately for him, both times out Carmichael comes from quite a ways behind him to overtake him for the lead. In moto one Carmichael bumps his way past Stewart and Stewart returns the favour only a few turns later.

"It was cheap what I did," Carmichael says. "I ran it in on him and I knew I had it coming back. I don't do anything without knowing I'm going to have it coming back. I was just eating his roost all the time and trying to get by and it wasn't happening so I did that. I hate to do that. I hardly ever do that but I did it and then he did it and he got back by me and then I just followed him and bided my time until I could think of a good place to make a clean pass

and do some good racing."

Stewart has no hard feelings about it. "In that section back there it's one-lined and I think he was getting frustrated," Stewart says. "I was getting frustrated in practice with people roosting me so it was just the spur of the moment. It kind of shocked me because I think that was the first time all year that we've touched. But I'm a racer and I was trying to get back and I saw I had an inside line and it was just kind of payback. He said sorry and I said sorry after the race and that was the end. There's no bad blood between us."

But less than a lap later RC makes the pass stick and that's that – moto one to Carmichael. "I was able to get by him the second time clean and it was good," says Carmichael. "I'm glad we're leaving this track to get on some tracks where we won't have to bump to get by."

In moto two Stewart gets out to a huge advantage after RC falls on lap one. Once into second Carmichael can see he's catching Stewart and with only two laps to go he makes the pass stick. Only a few turns later, though, Carmichael goes down in a heap handing the lead – and the overall – to Stewart.

"I actually saw him crashing," Stewart says. "I told myself 'man, if you save that I'm going to come over and bow down to you'. I don't know

of anybody that could save that. But he was swapping going up there and I thought he might save it and he didn't."

Carmichael describes his crash. "I was on the inside charging and getting ready to scrub that jump and as I landed over those three little bumps before there my tyres started sliding and then they caught and I had all my weight forward and away I went," he says. "I was scared to death in the air because I thought James was coming and I thought maybe he had too much momentum to be able to swerve out of the way and not hit me. But obviously he seen me going down and was able to swerve out of the way. It's just something that happened in slow motion and I seen it coming and I just tried to hold on and I couldn't do it."

Carmichael recovers for second but the overall goes to Stewart. "It feels good to be back," Stewart says. "It was a hard road to get here, having all the injuries I had. I was just struggling. I felt like we came into this and we got the bike working a lot better so I'm a lot stronger. I'm looking forward to having a week off and getting back healthy."





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VILLOPOTO PUSHES...

...but it's Alessi who leads

Ryan Villopoto's dominance continues in the 125cc class as he comes through the pack to decimate the field in his rookie campaign.

At Unadilla he chases the fleeting Mike Alessi for the entire moto to no avail as the holeshot artist secures the win. In moto two, however, a poor start by Alessi sees him struggle through to seventh while Villopoto takes a so-so start and converts it to a runaway win which means not only the overall but a slim points advantage in the series.

"It feels good. I've been trailing Mike these whole six races or however many we've had and now I'm out front and I think it seems like my race to lose now," Villopoto says. "I need to work on my starts. I think I could've had the holeshot that second moto but I think I mis-shifted or something. That really balled me up. Other than that I think the track was pretty one-lined and it was hard to pass and the rocks were pretty bad."

Alessi's relieved to relinquish the points lead. "I think it's actually kind of good because I had so much pressure on me to keep the points lead," he says. "Everybody's like 'you got to do it today, you can't lose the points lead'. That's all I've been hearing. I think it's kind of good to put the pressure on him a little bit and be the hunter."

"The hardest thing is to keep the points lead and I would know because I've just been mind-wrecked the last few weeks thinking 'I can't lose the points lead'. That's all I've been thinking about. Now that I lost it I think it's good because now he has the pressure and me and Andrew are the ones that are going for him now."

However, the Colorado round sees Villopoto go 1-1 at Andrew Short's home race, extending his points lead to 13 over Alessi who goes 4-3. It's Villopoto's fifth win in the first seven rounds with his only losses coming at the opener at Hangtown and at Southwick where his bike breaks in moto one.

Unfortunately for Villopoto, his bike breaks again in moto one at Washougal – his home race – as he's running fourth early in the race. "At the very top of the hill in moto one, I just got up there and the bike stopped," Villopoto says. "I don't know why. It's kind of a bummer to have this happen at my home track but I guess I'll just have to come back in two weeks and try to do it again and get my wins back up there."

Although Villopoto recovers for second in moto two, Andrew Short goes 1-1 while Alessi goes 3-4 for third overall. Alessi now has a three-point advantage heading into the final four races.

"I heard his bike sputtering as he went up the hill right before it blew up and then I saw him pull off and I was like 'oh my god, I can't believe this is happening'," Alessi says. "I passed by him and I was like 'just stay right here in third, get some good points'."

"The second moto, I got a good start and I didn't want to push it too much and do something dumb. I just wanted to get some good points and go to Millville with a points lead. I've got three points and that's all that I need."

SERIES STANDINGS

250F class

| | | |
|----|------------------|------------|
| 1 | Mike Alessi | 315 points |
| 2 | Ryan Villopoto | 312 |
| 3 | Andrew Short | 280 |
| 4 | Josh Grant | 261 |
| 5 | Andrew McFarlane | 229 |
| 6 | Brett Metcalfe | 226 |
| 7 | Nathan Ramsey | 168 |
| 8 | Troy Adams | 143 |
| 9 | Matt Goerke | 136 |
| 10 | Broc Heplar | 133 |



Ryan Villopoto can win from the front – but he can also come through the pack to do it



Brett Metcalfe holds down sixth in the 250F division



Andrew Short goes 1-1 at Washougal



SVEN WHO?

MX3 title holder Sven Breugelmans is the forgotten world champ in a class that's been stripped of its prestige – but surely anyone who can defeat Yves Demaria over a season is deserving of respect?

Words and photos by Alex Hodgkinson

PRESENTING SVEN Breugelmans – the forgotten world champion. Some felt the big guy from the sandy wastes of northern Belgium took last year's MX3 world title almost by default but the 26-year-old has made the doubters eat their words this summer as he slogs it out week-in, week-out with his KTM team-mate Yves Demaria – the winningest Frenchman in GP history – in defence of his crown.

"I know the level is a little bit lower than MX1 and for sure the top five riders in MX1 are stronger than anyone with MX3 but I am proud of my title and people should not forget that I took the title from Yves Demaria, one of the greatest riders the sport has ever known. Okay, he is not so young any more but when he races in MX1 he can still mix it with the top five so we must be pretty fast!

"For sure a rider like Stefan Everts will win no matter where he rides but a lot of those riders in the sub top, I think they would get a shock if they came to MX3 and thought they were going to win. The MX3 bike is much different to ride. I've been racing the MX3 bike for two years now and it is only now that I can genuinely say that I am confident. And I still find it difficult with all of the horsepower on the tight tracks.

"The engine is very strong but the handling is not always easy. You have to ride much smoother on the MX3 or it will throw you off. Our MX3 bikes are so fast on the straights but I

think you can often ride faster lap times with the 450. You must have more respect for the bike and not push it too much in the turns.

"The difference to the 450 is one of the main reasons I didn't take any wildcard rides last year. I never get the opportunity to practice with a 450 and our MX3 GP bikes were very big last year. You cannot ride with the 450 style on the MX3 and you cannot ride the MX3 the way you would ride a 450.

"Maybe I will take a wildcard this year but I will only do it on a track which I like. For sure I won't ride Namur, I hate the place and never ride well there. If I am going to ride in MX1 then I want to be able to ride for top five and on tracks I like I am capable of that."

It is refreshing to hear that Sven was recognised for his title in his homeland. "Of course I am not famous like Stefan but he is a national personality. He is the king, the nine-times world champion. Everybody in Belgium, people who have never been to a motocross race, know Stefan and Joel Smets. But the recognition was not so bad. I got some TV and newspaper articles."

Sven first hit the world stage in 2001, Dobber's title year, when he twice made the podium on a 125 Yamaha. His results were enough to land a ride with the Suzuki factory squad of Sylvain Geboers but the dream ride soon turned sour as he suffered two torrid years of injury and rejection.



profile

Sven knows his title means something. "People should not forget that I took it from Yves Demaria"



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Jacky Martens...

...on why we need MX3

"I think when someone has proved that they are a good rider as Sven had done in 2001 it is not something they forget that quick. When you can be on the podium of two GPs then you have what it takes and there must be something else wrong if you stop getting the results.

"I watched Sven at the races in 2003 and I saw that he was struggling with the bike because it wasn't set up for him. But I was patient, I couldn't go barging in. I waited for the right moment to approach him when he was free.

"You know, many people don't look past the surface. I remember when we signed Yves that everyone said he was difficult to work with but I find him completely the opposite, very professional and dedicated. When a bike is not good you have to say so and some of the teams he rode for couldn't take the criticism.

"It is my job to make life easy for the rider. They

should not have to worry about little things, they must be able to concentrate on their riding and getting results. The rest is down to the team.

"You know, the sport needs MX3. Sure, the top riders in MX1 are the best riders in the world but there are only three places on the podium and the way it is at the moment there are only a very few riders who can be on the podium.

"Just look at MX1 and tell me how many of the teams are in a secure financial state. At the Milan Show I saw how difficult it was for even big teams in MX1 to find a sponsor but I had 1-2-3 in the world and I got my sponsors. But go to sponsors with no-one in the top 10 like Jan De Groot and it's not so easy.

"I think some of these teams and riders will be looking to come to MX3 in the end but we have to promote the series. Youthstream need to promote all three classes equally, to give them the same exposure. At the moment it is all MX1 and everything thinks they have to go there but if motocross is to survive we need three classes."



Jacky Martens spotted Sven's talent and signed him up

© JM Racing



"The first year I was with Suzuki I was team-mate of Pichon. I had a good winter and training was going good but at the first race at Hawkstone another rider crashed in front of me, I couldn't avoid him and I broke both the tibia and fibula in my left leg. I was out for three months, then the first time I got back on a bike, just going slow and being careful, I put my leg down in a corner and I had terrible pain in the knee, I went back to the doctor and it was only then that we found out the ligament was broken so I had another three months out and the season was over.

"I was very happy at first that I got the chance to stay on the team for another year in 2003 but Stribos joined the team and I was the third wheel. No-one had time for me, everything was put into Pichon and Stribos and no-one was trying to make my bike how I wanted it. I got really depressed, my confidence was going down every race. I was riding so stiff because I

didn't trust the bike and nobody wanted to alter my suspension or anything. Every time I asked I just got told that they had tried that for Pichon or Stribos but nobody seemed to want to think it might be something for me. People outside don't know what is happening and just think you are slow.

"I just had to get out of the team and left before the end of the season. I had nothing. Yamaha Van Beers offered to help me with a 250 four-stroke for the last couple of races in Holland but they could not commit themselves to the following year.

"And then Jacky came to me and offered me the factory KTMs. I only had to ride the bike once to know it was the bike for me. And we have taken it step by step since then. The first year I was fourth and then last year I got the title.

"It was immediately different when I signed for Jacky. He has a lot of interest in the bike,

the suspension and together we have been able to make a bike which is good for me. We have a good atmosphere and can have fun in the team but we also need to be serious. Racing for the world title is a serious matter and we have worked hard for it.

"It's a nice feeling to go to the MX3 GPs and know that everyone is looking to you because you are the champion. And, as things are at present, I am very happy in MX3. I have a great team, good bikes, I like riding the big bikes and when nothing changes perhaps I will stay another five years in MX3.

"This year is a great battle with Yves for the title. For sure he was expected to be stronger on the hardpack tracks but I have trained well this winter. I feel fitter than ever and I have traded wins on those hard tracks and beat him in sand. Anyway I am the champion, I have the number one plate and if he wants the title back he will have to take it from me!"

DAWG'S DVD DECATHLON⁺²



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Full Circle: A Nate Adams Documentary

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Nate Adams is probably the world's finest freestyle motocross rider ever and he's also one of the world's most determined and disciplined athletes ever – except of course for Lance Armstrong who's the king of the comeback. Nate's not only battled through the FMX ranks to be the first man to beat Pastrana head-to-head in the X-Games but he's also fought back to fitness from serious head and leg injuries.

Full Circle tells the full Nate Adams tale from his shaky beginnings on minibikes to the point where he's the undoubted King of FMX. And like all good movies there's plenty of drama and action thrown into the mix.

Even if you're not a fan of freestyle you'll still be impressed by Nate's attitude as he battles through pain and doubt while bouncing back to full strength from some horrific – but well filmed – crashes. All-in-all Full Circle is a great movie that's a definite break from the norm.

Charge

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From the mean streets of NYC to the mud bogs of Tennessee if it's got four wheels and a pair of bars it's in this DVD. Quad is America's #1 magazine for fans of four-wheeled moto-madness and Charge is their televisual look at the US of A's four-wheelin', thumb-throttlin' scene. Expect to see back-flips, motocross madness, desert racing duels and more in this 35-minute action-packed DVD.



Supercross: The Movie

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Prepare for a non-stop, high-energy cheese-fest when you slip this badboy in your DVD player as Supercross: The Movie does its best to grate you down – Gorgonzola stylee – with an overdose of motocross mozzarella that's surprisingly tasty even though it's oh-so wrong.

Although it's the sport of supercross that's meant to be the star of this film it's actually the sensually sexy Sophia Bush – yup, the chick-o-latte from Van Wilder and One Tree Hill – who gets pulses rising as she smoulders on-screen as the girlfriend of KC Carlyle – a young up-and-coming racer who scores a ride with the all-conquering Team Nami.

Tension between KC and his wild-riding, privateer brother Trip rises to fever-pitch until a career-ending crash makes them all realise brotherly love conquers all in America – or some crap like that – and the only way KC will ever defeat the supercross elite is if they give each other thumbs-ups, big smiles and obligatory pats on the back.

If you can see past the parmesan plot that has more holes in it than a lump of Switzerland's finest then Supercross: The Movie really ain't that bad so check it out when it hits stores in early September.

On The Pipe 2

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This movie is some bad-ass shizzle and it features all your American motocross and FMX heroes doing what they do best – bustin' big! On The Pipe 2 is so awesome that OTP should stand for Off This Planet! So don't be a dork – buy a copy of this DVD now!



Red Bull Romaniacs 2005

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The Red Bull Romaniacs is the world's toughest enduro rallye and this DVD featurette shows just what goes down in deepest, darkest Romania when you gather a bunch of the world's finest off-road racers and put them on the most tremendously technical trails Eastern Europe has to offer.

There's plenty of awesome riding footage from the event along with rider interviews and some behind the scenes stuff along with the most bizarre soundtrack ever thrown together in a dirt bike movie!

Mini Chaos III Path Of Destruction

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This DVD reminded me of the early Crusty movies that had enough mad tricks, hot chicks and blown-up bits to keep you on the edge of your seat for the full feature. While the quality may be a little low at times the action comes so thick and fast you'll do well to take it all in first time around.

While Mini Chaos III is mostly minibike related there are a couple of FMX and road bike sections as well as a fair few fist fights, some ghastly gashes and a little nudity which means this movie is only suited for mature but immature audiences.

One of the highlights of this movie is the awesome indoor racing footage shot in Las Vegas' mega New Orleans Arena as Jeremy McGrath and Chris Gosselaar go head-to-head for the gold on their Honda 10-inchers.





SX Exposed Volume 2.2



The 2006 AMA supercross series was the most exciting in history with the title chase going down to the very last Main Event between RC, James Stewart and Chad Reed. And luckily for us moto-movie junkies Studio 411's SX Exposed series of DVDs really gets in the thick of the action to bring you the thrills, spills and all the controversy of America's #1 indoor motocross championship.

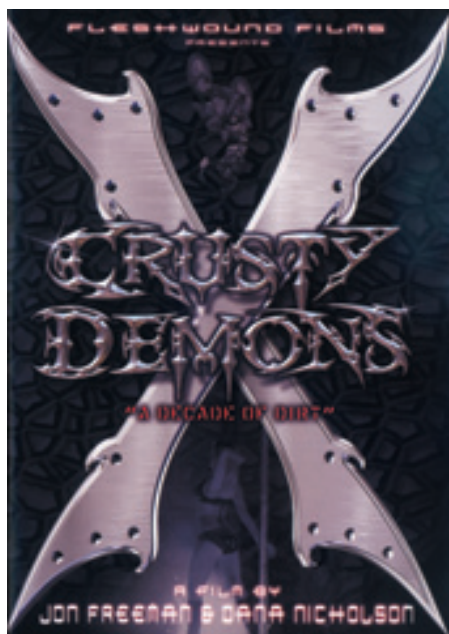
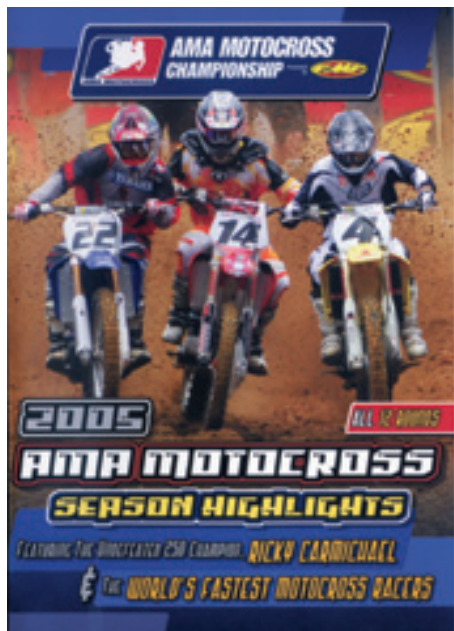
SX Exposed 2.2 focuses on the San Diego through Orlando rounds which see the return of Travis Pastrana, an RC DNF and then the fuel drama. It's all exciting, well-filmed stuff with some excellent narration from Gregg Godfrey and a worthy addition to anyone's DVD stash.

2005 AMA Motocross Championship



With bar-to-bar action from each and every round – and both classes – of the 2005 AMA Outdoor Nationals you can't really go wrong with this DVD. While Carmichael wipes up and Stewart wipes out in the 250s things are much closer in the 125s as Langston, Alessi, Brown, Hepler, Short and eventual champion Tedesco all star at the front during the 12-round series.

The tension rises until it all comes to a head at the final round of the 125 title chase and you won't believe your eyes as Langston, Alessi and Tedesco mix it up! Absolutely awesome stuff!



Crusty Demons X A Decade Of Dirt



Fleshwound Films present their 10th anniversary issue of their oh-so crazy Crusty Demons of Dirt series that's cunningly called Crusty Demons X – a Decade of Dirt. This DVD features all the usual riders doing the usual Crusty things to the usual Crusty soundtrack in a handful of the usual and some more unusual – New Zealand and Australia – Crusty locations.

Magoo: The Story Of Danny Chandler



Most motocross fans from the early '80s will no-doubt remember the wild-riding and booze-fuelled antics of Danny 'Magoo' Chandler who is probably the fastest man never to win himself a major championship. From the West coast of America to the farmland of Eastern Europe, Magoo wowed fans with his do-or-go-home-in-an-ambulance attitude to winning and entertaining which ultimately ended his career as a motorcycle racer in the winter of 1985.

In this DVD – Magoo: The Story of Danny Chandler – there's plenty of old-time footage of Danny and fellow racing legends Brad Lackey, Ricky Johnson, Jeff Ward, Darrel Schultz and others from both sides of the Atlantic who also talk in-depth about Danny and his exploits both before and after the Paris Percy accident which left him confined to a wheelchair. This movie makes for compulsive viewing and is a firm favourite in the Dawg DVD drawer.



Transworld Motocross: Skills 2



Andrew Short and the Transworld Motocross crew pick up where Ryan Hughes left off with their original instructional DVD - Skills - in an all-new production. With Shorty in control he takes us through all the basics as well as some exciting new pro techniques such as scrubbing and the like.

And as well as learning some good riding techniques you can also pick up some top tech tips from master-mech Losch as he teaches you top-secret tips to keep your scooter in tip-top condition. All in all Skills 2 is worth watching as even the best riders will learn something from this DVD.

Mike Metzger: The Godfather of FMX



I'm pretty damn sure there's already a trilogy of Godfather movies on the shelves of my local rental store – Davide's DVD-o-rama – although none of them feature the tattooed originator of FMX tomfoolery Mike Metzger.

Metz has been on the freestyle scene from day one but the ex-supercross racer isn't just a one-dimensional jump-monkey as this movie shows. As well as being a flippin' legend on two wheels Mike's also a loving father and loyal husband and that's what award winning movie-maker Evan Stone manages to capture with this film along with Metzger's motorcycle madness both on the dirt and in the air. Also stars top FMX riders Pastrana, Adams and more.



A few simple training techniques can make all the difference come race day



START 'EM YOUNG!

A basic, structured training plan can have huge benefits for youth riders – just remember to keep it fun...

Words by Alan Milway Photos by Suttly

YOUTH MOTOCROSS is very popular in the UK. The schoolies are seen as the future of the sport, the pool of talent the next big thing will come from and big teams often have an eye on youngsters from an early age. With this comes an increased focus from riders, parents and teams on success.

I'm wary of putting children under too much pressure but there's every reason to help a keen young rider improve their riding and training is an integral part of this. It is not only beneficial for their riding but will really improve their health too.

People often ask me if strength training is safe to do with young, pre-pubescent children. Children increase strength with age – if a six-year-old can do three press-ups an eight-year-old can do more and a 12-year-old can do more still. This is logical and is independent of any training they do but we can improve the actual strength of an individual too.

What is interesting is that when studies were done researching this, the strength gains were similar to those an adult could expect but there

was no muscle growth seen. The development was all due to neuromuscular development. This means the brain was 'learning' to lift a weight, perform an exercise and activate the muscles required.

This shows the potential children have regardless of muscle size or development and we must try to fulfil some of this potential through training. With children it's advisable to focus on exercises that use body weight as the resistance. Press-ups, sit-ups, dips and chin-ups all train upper body strength very well, are very relevant for motocross riders and will not put children at huge risk from muscle injury. Lifting heavy weights does set the alarm bells ringing – although many concerns are unsubstantiated. However, very heavy weights can damage bone fusions and ligaments in some circumstances and for this reason using similar weights protocols to that of adults is not recommended.

I am a PE teacher and I know that the kids love using the gym at school. With growing boys the competition aspect is always evident.

We start on cardiovascular equipment to warm up and then move onto the multi-gym. The weights lifted will be limited to only a couple of plates and attention will be given to technique. This also helps those less developed to compete too. The dip bars and chin-up bars are also great for them to learn on – just doing one or two is often a struggle and they enjoy the challenge. This is much safer than trying to lift weights to eight to 10 reps to failure as technique becomes poor as they try to lift more than their mates. This is when injuries happen.

I have mentioned the merits of strength training to begin with as this is the first thing people think of when referring to children 'training'. However, I don't think it's necessary to try and get special permission for under 16s to get access to the weights rooms in gyms if they follow the guidelines above, start simple and aim to increase strength endurance.

The major area we can work on – and get MASSIVE improvements – is in cardio training. Gone are the days when punishments were in the form of laps of a football pitch or lengths of



TOP TIPS!

Keeping kids keen

- Plan a couple of after-school sessions a week that focus around enjoyment and are not too strict but maintain steady effort for up to 30 minutes.
- As you develop the training add more goals to reach – laps done, lengths swam etc and add more of a challenge.
- Think of suitable rewards! A meal out on a Friday, 50p per lap, new plastics for the bike, anything that might get their attention without adding too much pressure to the training.
- Be prepared to get involved! Dads, you are the biggest role model and they will want to try and beat you.
- Use simple strength exercises such as press-ups and chin-ups before bed each day and note improvement. If you want to progress onto weights machines seek guidance for good technique.
- Monitor progress and keep it fun! If kids like it they will keep it up so set a good foundation now and it may help them keep it up and take their riding to the next level!

the pool. I find it amazing how unfit the school children I teach are – five minutes of constant running is a struggle, the pace is often very laboured and it is always clear who does any out-of-school activity. If your child races at the weekends and their only other form of exercise is PE during the week there's massive potential for increased fitness through a few training sessions throughout the week.

Cardio training for children should have a very different focus to that for adults. I use heart rates, durations and intensities as strict parameters for adult training plans. But this is too serious for children and training should be in the form of 'play'. The effort levels need to be steady so duration can be maximized but many will find a simple run boring. Try cross country runs through a park or in a forest.

Fartlek ('speed play') training is ideal for kids – this involves varying speeds. So start steady and then have a mini race to a lamp post, park bench etc. This keeps the heart beating and effort up and can be repeated as necessary. This can be done on a bicycle too and these

exercises can form a great backbone to a week's training. Think of 30 minutes as an optimal starting time for duration of sessions and work from this. It is important to point out to children why they are doing something – especially when coming from dad! Explain the better they can do in their training, the longer they can go in their race, the more laps they can stay near the front and the more fun it will be.

Now then parents, why should your son or daughter go out in the cold training if you're just going to sit in and watch the box? Be prepared to go with them, even if you are just going to watch, offer encouragement or do every other lap. Swimming sessions allow you to go along and maybe swim a little less than the next James Stewart but still be there and support them in their efforts.

One of the best things about getting your child into training is that they will develop an interest in their health – what they are eating, how to stay healthy etc. Test them on what they are eating at dinner and why they need to eat it.

medical milway

Alan Milway is a qualified sports scientist who runs MX Fitness specialising in training motocross and enduro riders. For more information on how Alan can help you train go to his website www.mxfitness.co.uk or call him on 07810 827427



Help them with healthy dinners and snacks and you will often find that if they know why they are eating it – and that it will make them go faster on their motorbike – they will be happy to eat it.

I have taught many boys who, once they hit Year 10, won't want to touch too many snacks or fizzy drinks as it holds no benefit for them and they understand why. They might be trying to look good for the girls as well as perform better but they are at the gym every lunchtime and ask me more questions than many of the riders I train!

A structured training plan for children will offer great improvements in health, fitness and their performance on the bike. Just be aware that it should not be done as a very serious, rigid chore but as something fun to do and something the top pros do too as this will motivate them to copy their role models. Use goals for them but make them realistic and help them enjoy it. They will see the results when they hit the track and this will lead to better adherence to training and more fun when it comes to racing.



ROCKET MAN!

Fujigas blasts to victory, Dougie misses out on a home turf ton and Brown and Wigg make sure there are Brits on top of the podium as Hawkstone Park gets another taste of world trials

Words by Sean Lawless Photos by Suttly

ELTON JOHN doesn't do trials (well, maybe the odd libel one) but if he did he'd probably have loved the GP of GB at Hawkstone Park where tantrums and tiaras are the order of the day...

The tantrums are largely centred around the podium area and section 15. Some tough observing leads to protests from, among others, Laia Sanz, Taddy Blazusiak and a baying mob of spectators whipped up by our very own mic-menace Jack Burnicle who stops just short of getting a Mexican wave going!

There's also a very out-of-character hissy fit

thrown by Dougie Lampkin who isn't hanging around to shoot the s**t with Barnacle after signing off fourth at an event he'd hoped would be his 100th WTC win – boy, does that man hate losing!

And the tiaras? They belong to '04 world champ and main event winner Takahisa Fujinami and British heroes Michael Brown and Alexz Wigg who come out top in the Junior and Youth divisions (well a tiara's kind of a crown isn't it!)...

The 15 sections are a mixture of the



Fujigas sets the pace from the off and then soaks up the pressure on his second lap to take a vital victory





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Ninth overall is disappointing for Dabill



Grimbo's forced to tackle the sections first but is pleased with his form



Bou spends much of the trial giving his minders a roasting

man-made and the super-bloody-natural, laid out to extract the very best from the very best. And they don't disappoint upwards of 8,000 trials fans who for the second year on the trot turn out in force to show that a round of the series on the British mainland is a viable proposition.

In fact, next year they A) shouldn't advertise it so heavily or B) at least dust down the famous Shropshire MX venue with some Agent Orange defoliator so C) I don't have to elbow my way through the crowds and shove flat-capped elderly men down 90 per cent inclines to see some action.

Visibility apart (and that's not a bona fide complaint by the way) it's a cracking trial with the only disappointment Dougie's failure to stick to the script and hit the ton on home turf. But Brown and Wiggy give the Brits plenty to cheer about and there's also a strong supporting role

played by Sam Haslam who nips in ahead of Italian Matteo Grattarola and French series leader Loris Gubian for a storming second behind Alexz!

But in DBR's book the unsung hero of the day is Spain's Albert Cabestany who comes off worse from a 32-33-34-mark photo-finish between himself, Fujigas and Adam Raga. The factory Sherco rider is one of the victims of section 15's teak-tough observer Ron Eddings and his maximum score there on the first lap – for crossing an imaginary line between two markers – costs him the win. But instead of spitting the dummy he just accepts his fate and gets on with the job in hand.

Good work Albert – and a nice contrast to your compatriot Toni Bou who seems to be throwing a few 'jode' into his minders at every opportunity!

Fuji's win is his third on the bounce and

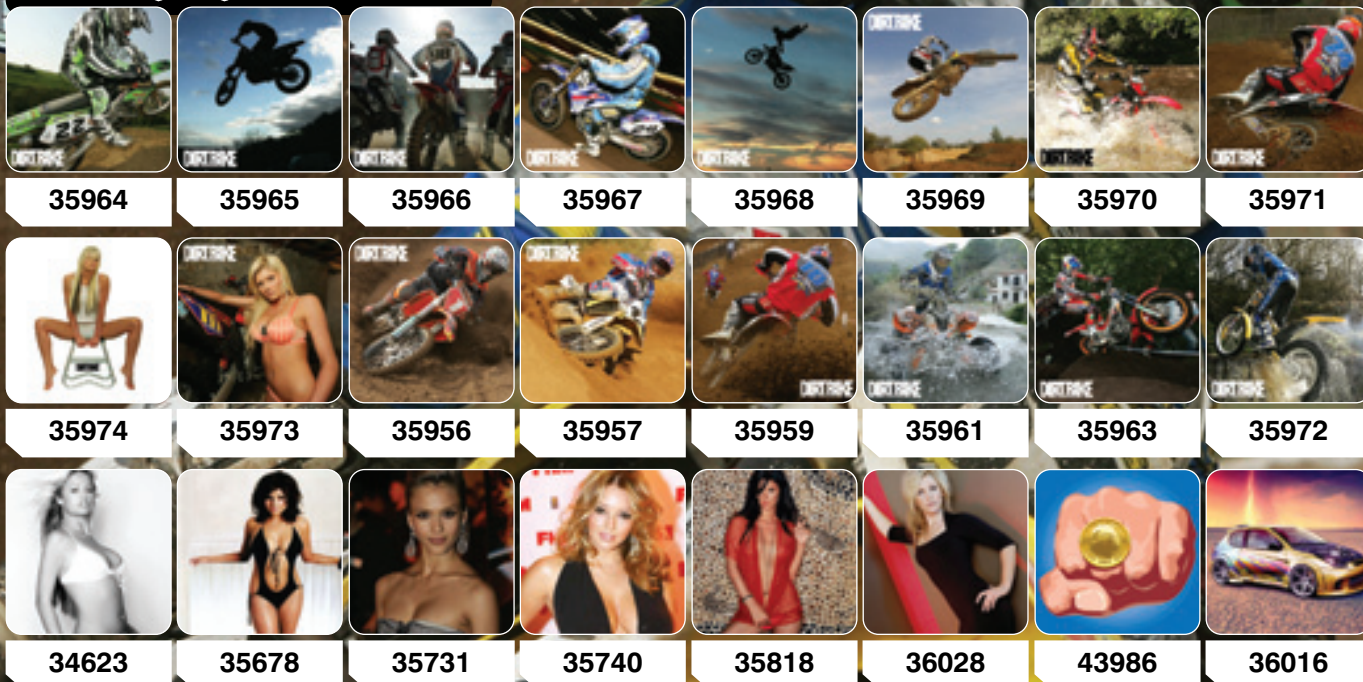
Dougie's gutted to end the day in fourth



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Bits from the Brits

Michael Brown

Bike: Top Trial Team Beta

Class: Junior

Position: 1

"I haven't seen the results yet but hopefully I've got the win and if I have it's going to be very close in the championship. Two rounds to go and the pressure's on! I'll just have to relax and get on with it..."

Graham Jarvis

Bike: MRS Sherco

Class: WTC

Position: 10

"I was always going to be up against it being first man round but I really enjoyed it. I had some good rides, a few sections I was nearly there – although I know it's no good being nearly there – but I've really enjoyed it. I think I'd probably have another go next year if I was a bit fitter – I ain't been on a bike properly for a month. You need to be riding trials at this level to be on the pace but I'm happy with the way I rode seeing as I've not been riding world rounds and not been on my bike. I can't complain."

Shaun Morris

Bike: Prolec Gas Gas

Class: WTC

Position: 11

"I've just not ridden that great today to be honest, I'm a little disappointed but what can you do? The trial's been spot on but unfortunately I've not been on the best of form and the rain made things really difficult."

James Dabill

Bike: Top Trial Team Beta

Class: WTC

Position: 9

"I'm quite a lot disappointed to be fair. I started off really well and I knew I was riding really well and a lot of other riders were making the mistakes. But then the second lap I seemed to make a lot more mistakes than everyone else. The home support's been amazing – it gives you a big confidence boost but I just couldn't produce the result. I've still got a lot to learn so I've got to remind myself it's still my first year and just keep going."

Alexz Wigg

Bike: JST Gas Gas UK

Class: Youth

Position: 1

"I'm absolutely over the moon with today's result, I had an awesome first lap which set me up for the day. The second lap, halfway round it started to go a bit wrong for me so I had 10 minutes to sort of have a bit of a recoup and think about what was going on and got on with the job. I was feeling lots of pressure before it started because I wanted to do well in front of the home crowd but it's all worked out well. I'm absolutely chuffed to bits."

Sam Haslam

Bike: Gas Gas UK

Class: Youth

Position: 2

"I'm really pleased with that considering I don't ride a 125 all the time – after getting off a 280 the power's totally different so it's turned out good today. I hoped for a result like this but I don't know if I expected it and fair play to Wiggy, he's rode it really well today. It's great riding in front of some home fans, I really enjoyed it."



Raga's still sitting pretty to retain his crown



helps him close to within 12 points of defending champion Adam Raga in the title fight. And it's an important win for the Japanese star who's finished runner-up in the WTC an amazing – and heart-breaking – six times as he battles to avoid his seventh FIM silver.

"The first lap I felt my riding was good but the second lap, I was getting a little tired," admits Fuji. "I also made some big mistakes on some of the sections in the second lap. So I didn't think I could win at that point but I am so pleased I was able to take the victory. I hope this will make Adam nervous for the rest of the championship. I think this will put the pressure even more on him for the last two rounds."

Raga's second lap total of 12 is the best of the day and helps hoist him from third behind

Fuji and Prince Albert after the opening tour.

But for Dougie there's to be no repeat of his '05 heroics when he came back from a shocking first lap to record a famous victory. His first lap total of 30 is a full 16 behind his team-mate Fuji's pace-setting score and despite dragging himself back up the leaderboard with a second lap total of 19 he's never in contention.

"I've been struggling a little in the last couple of rounds and hoped that at my home event I could turn it round and get back on the top of the podium," says the seven-time world champ. "But I struggled a little in practice – I didn't feel completely confident. I felt that if I could get a good start that would set me up well but unfortunately it didn't happen."

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Results

WTC

| | | | |
|----|--------------------|-----------------------|-----------|
| 1 | Takahisa Fujinami | (Repsol Montesa HRC) | 14+18=32 |
| 2 | Adam Raga | (Gas Gas Trial) | 21+12=33 |
| 3 | Albert Cabestany | (Sherco Tarragona) | 19+15=34 |
| 4 | Dougie Lampkin | (Repsol Montesa HRC) | 30+19=49 |
| 5 | Toni Bou | (Beta) | 26+25=51 |
| 6 | Marc Freixa | (RFME Beta) | 30+31=62 |
| 7 | Jeroni Fajardo | (Gas Gas Trial) | 32+33=65 |
| 8 | Tadeusz Blazusiak | (Scorpa) | 41+46=87 |
| 9 | James Dabill | (Top Trial Team Beta) | 34+56=90 |
| 10 | Graham Jarvis | (MRS Sherco) | 49+42=91 |
| 11 | Shaun Morris | (Prolec Gas Gas) | 54+45=99 |
| 12 | Michael Phillipson | (Repsol Beta) | 58+63=122 |

Junior

| | | | |
|----|-------------------|-----------------------|-----------|
| 1 | Michael Brown | (Top Trial Team Beta) | 16+20=36 |
| 2 | Daniel Gibert | (RFME Montesa) | 23+20=43 |
| 3 | Daniel Oliveras | (RFME Gas Gas) | 16+33=49 |
| 4 | Francesco Iolitta | (Italia Sherco) | 40+38=78 |
| 5 | Nicolas Gontard | (Camozi Gas Gas) | 41+40=81 |
| 6 | Joan Cordon | (RFME Montesa) | 28+55=83 |
| 7 | Julien Arnaud | (Dherbey Gas Gas) | 40+47=87 |
| 8 | Laia Sanz | (Repsol Montesa HRC) | 49+48=97 |
| 9 | James Fry | (MRS Sherco) | 63+61=124 |
| 10 | Boyd Willcocks | (Australia Beta) | 58+67=125 |
| 11 | Sean Doyle | (Comp Trial Sherco) | 60+70=130 |
| 12 | Richard Ely | (Sherco) | 65+66=132 |

Youth

| | | | |
|----|-------------------|-------------------------|----------|
| 1 | Alexz Wigg | (JST Gas Gas UK) | 4+27=31 |
| 2 | Sam Haslam | (Gas Gas UK) | 15+23=38 |
| 3 | Matteo Grattarola | (Italia Sherco) | 19+20=39 |
| 4 | Loris Gubian | (Sherco) | 16+27=43 |
| 5 | Alfredo Gomez | (RFME Gas Gas) | 26+26=52 |
| 6 | Lee Sampson | (MRS Sherco) | 28+28=56 |
| 7 | Ross Danby | (JST Gas Gas) | 30+31=61 |
| 8 | Richard Ellwood | (MRS Sherco) | 23+40=63 |
| 9 | Nicolas Karim | (Equipe France Gas Gas) | 32+36=68 |
| 10 | Alexis Cervantes | (Equipe France Gas Gas) | 35+39=74 |
| 11 | Craig Robertson | (JST Gas Gas) | 39+44=83 |
| 12 | Robert Andrews | (Trialstars Gas Gas) | 42+51=93 |

Series standings

WTC

1 Raga 166 points, 2 Fujinami 154, 3 Lampkin 146, 4 Cabestany 140, 5 Bou 135, 6 Fajardo 109, 7 Freixa 87, 8 Blazusiak 87, 9 Dabill 66, 10 Morris 41

Junior

1 Oliveras 174 points, 2 Gibert 174, 3 Brown 172, 4 Gontard 119, 5 Iolitta 107, 6 Sanz 87, 7 Cordon 59, 8 Soulas 50, 9 Ely 49, 10 Arnaud 40

Youth

1 Gubian 160 points, 2 Grattarola 142, 3 Wigg 141, 4 Gomez 123, 5 Karim 98, 6 Sampson 96, 7 Danby 92, 8 Haslam 86, 9 Liotaud 54, 10 Cervantes 43



Michael Brown blitzer the Junior class



Fajardo comes home seventh



Tough observing costs Albert Cabestany the win



Tadeusz Blazusiak is another who feels the full force of Ron Eddings super-tough observing



ROCK ON TOMMY!

While Tommy Cannon and Bobby Ball may claim to be Britain's numero uno coastal town comedy act it's t'other Tommy – Tommy Searle – who's the summertime seaside show-stopper in Whitby

Words and photos by Suffy

A WICKED combination of baking-hot sunshine and a whoop-infested, jumped-filled circuit – that's marked out with p-p-plenty of those little yellow Acerbis track markers you find at the AMA nationals – might have you thinking you've been magically transported to the US of A as you turn off of the A171 into the Whitby MX club's Skelder Bank circuit.

But the illusion is soon blown away as the man on the gate greets all-comers with a broadly barked 'alreet?' in that bread and butter Yorkshire accent that fiery Fred Trueman (1931 – 2006 RIP) made infamous on t'wireless during t'BBC's cricket broadcasts!

But if there's one man, nay boy, who's feeling 'alreet' in wonderful Whitby then it has to be Molson Kawasaki's teen-sensation Tommy Searle. Tommy heads to Whitby five points

down in the Maxxis championship but leaves nine up – now that's some day at the office! While Tommy has a chuffing great time in Yorkshire – taking both race wins and leading every single lap – his series rivals do not.

Defending champ Carl Nunn begins his day badly with a dire start in moto one but rides like a legend to move into second by mid-race before being beaten back to third by Tommy's team-mate Gareth Swanepoel who gets faster and faster as the race goes on. And moto two also sees Nunny being done from behind by Swanny but this time in a totally different way...

As Carl leads the troops on lap one, Swanny – who's running second – gets a wee bit giddy and gives the champ a love-tap from behind which sends the EA KTM rider to the deck. While Swanny gets going again in fourth,

Nunn's in 20th with a whole heap of work to do.

And despite being hampered by the dusty conditions Carl moves up to 11th by lap three before getting caught in a choking cloud kicked up by a Barr, Simpson, Banks-Browne freight-train for the next five laps. By the time he's picked them off one-by-one there's only enough time for Carl to claim fifth from Jason Dougan as the chequered flag's unfurled.

Nunn's 3-5 card is only slightly bettered by the other veteran series contender Billy Mac who has a decidedly indifferent day but still manages to scrape together the final podium spot behind the Molson boys with 4-3 finishes.

With only four championship motos left the old guard (that's MacKenzie and Nunn) are gonna have their hands full pulling back the points lead of the whipper-snapper (that's

TOMMY SEARLE MX2 WHITBY 1-1

"I was looking forward to the races after being second in qualifying because the track was really good and just my type of layout with a lot of whoops. In the first race I passed Wayne Smith quickly and then got my head down to put in some fast laps – I had a four-second lead after about two laps and controlled it from there.

"In the second moto I was third out of the start and then Swanny and Carl had a little crash in front of me. I went around the outside to take the lead and then had to work hard to hold off Swanny – I think we were easily the two fastest riders throughout the day. It feels great to have won again and to have taken the double win proves that it wasn't just down to luck."

Tommy) whose speed and confidence levels seem to be increasing week on week.

If the on-track antics of the MX2 brigade weren't enough to satisfy the 3,000-strong crowd's insatiable appetite for all-out racing action then the first moto MX1 battle should have really hit the spot as Honda racers Josh Coppins, James Noble, Ken De Dycker and Gordon Crockard slug it out in a gruelling battle of attrition.

JC grabs the holeshot and works on pulling away from Noble who's second while De Dycker hangs tough and Crockard recomposes himself after getting a bit buck-wild through the rhythm section on lap one. And it's the entrance to that very same section where the lead's lost by JC as he hits an unearthed rock and goes down leaving the local boy – Noble – in the lead.

But he's not there for too long...

Just three laps later the leading four catch a bunch of battling back-markers and all hell breaks loose – De Dycker's able to pass Noble and Crockard's punted clean off the track by one of the lappers! As Crockard recomposes himself for the second time Coppins ups his pace and picks off Ken then James before motoring on for a fine victory.

Compared to the opener, moto two is a relatively dull affair that's not helped in the slightest by billowing clouds of blinding dust. Coppins yanks the holey and from there he knows the race is his – he's even posing for the camera as early as lap two (you really want a cover that bad, huh Josh?).

After having his hands full with an on-form Bryan MacKenzie in the early laps, Crockard

settles into second but a pair of pants pants (they keep falling down) and a pants rear brake (it's boiled up in the heat) conspire to keep the Irishman from reeling in Coppins – pants, pants, pants!

De Dycker claws his way up to third in the race after a relatively poor start. This strong ride helps stretch out his championship lead over Noble to 45 points and there's a strong possibility that Keeno could well be crowned champ next time out at Wakes Colne.

Noble also has a fight on his hands through the pack in moto two after tangling with Mark Jones and Julien Bill coming off the concrete launch pad. The contact kills James' rear brake and a steady ride to fourth is all the Whitby warrior can do to keep second in the series secure.



JOSH COPPINS
MX1 WHITBY 1-1

"I crashed in the first moto around the halfway mark when I came up to some lapped riders. I couldn't see too well because of the dust and hit a rock and went

down. I managed to recover well to win the race. "The second moto went according to plan with another win – the track was quite demanding on the knees with all the jumps and was quite slick because of the hot weather but I enjoyed racing today."



Ken De Dycker takes second on the day to move to within sight of the British MX1 title



GARETH SWANEPOEL
MX2 WHITBY 2-2

"It was a good day. The track was awesome with many whoops and timing sections and the best we have had in the British championships this season. I didn't get the best of starts in the first race and was stuck fighting with MacKenzie and those guys which meant that Tommy got away. I reached second spot but I could not close the gap and just controlled the margin that I had over third."

"In the second moto my start was a lot better but for some reason Carl Nunn braked really hard on the approach to a jump and I could not stop in time and hit his back wheel. We both crashed and I saw Tommy taking the lead. Again I got through to second and was closing him down but I ran out of time."



JAMES NOBLE
MX1 WHITBY 3-4

"First race was good. Got away in second behind Josh and he was edging away slightly. I had Ken behind me then Josh slipped off giving me the lead. I made a few mistakes and Ken got by me then Josh came by us both."

"In the second race me and Mark Jones got tangled up on the start straight so I didn't get such a good start and I was buried deep in the pack. When we were tangled I must have damaged my back brake as it wasn't working so I had no back brake for the whole race."

CARL NUNN
MX2 WHITBY 4-3

"First race I didn't get the best start – I made it difficult for myself – but I came through to second but Gareth came back at me. I worked out the points in my head and figured we'd be level so I settled for that and I planned to give it my all in the second race."

"I got the holeshot – the perfect start – and just

wanted to get around the first lap safely and go for it from there. I came to a corner with a little jump on the inside and as I took off I got hit from behind – it was Gareth – and he just clean wiped me out."

"From then on I just had to get back through the pack as best I could, it was okay in the early going as I could pass the slower riders no problem but when I caught the faster guys it was a bit tougher – especially with all the dust."





GORDON CROCKARD
MX1 WHITBY 4-2

"I'd say I got the holeshot in the first race but Josh squared the corner off and straight lined it and hit me. The first thing I thought was 'that's payback for Sweden' – he did tell me he was going to pay me back for that so I guess we're equal again now which is fair. It dropped me down to fourth or fifth and I had a real tough time getting past one of the Twisted boys [Bryan MacKenzie].
"I caught up with De Dycker and Noble then Josh came off so I was in third and I thought I was going to win it as I felt I had the legs on both Ken and Noble

and Josh was behind me and it was all getting a bit exciting. We came across four back markers in a corner and it all got a bit hectic – I collided with someone and ran off the track so I had to settle for fourth.
"In race two I got away off the start behind Josh and I really wanted to stay with him then as the race wore on I was hoping he'd get tired and I'd be able to motor on by him. It was sort of going to plan then I had a couple of problems, the first being my rear brake stopped working and the second was my pants started falling down – I came out of a corner and they were around my knees. I kept it going to finish in second."



MARK JONES
MX1 WHITBY DNF-8

"This was definitely my worst British event ever. Just racing accidents that happen through the year piled into two motos. Moto two's crash was tough, rounding the turn locked flat-out with James (Noble) I thought we were going to split but a second later I was being dragged along the track expecting to get hit – thankfully everybody missed me and I didn't get injured."

BILLY MACKENZIE
MX2 WHITBY 3-5

"I'm not happy with third and it was a fairly non-descript meeting. I just could not get going in the first moto and was not being creative with the track. I

Results - round six

MX1

| | | |
|--------------------|---------------------|----------|
| 1 Josh Coppins | (CAS Honda) | 30+30=60 |
| 2 Ken De Dycker | (CAS Honda) | 27+25=52 |
| 3 Gordon Crockard | (Wulfsport Honda) | 23+27=50 |
| 4 James Noble | (RWJ Honda) | 25+23=48 |
| 5 Neville Bradshaw | (Motovision Suzuki) | 21+21=42 |
| 6 Bryan MacKenzie | (Twisted7 Kawasaki) | 19+17=36 |
| 7 Mark Eastwood | (Wiseco Honda) | 17+10=27 |
| 8 Danny Smyth | (Honda) | 15+11=26 |
| 9 Glen Phillips | (ARW Yamaha) | 10+13=23 |
| 10 Jody Smyth | (Honda) | 13+9=22 |

MX2

| | | |
|--------------------|------------------------|----------|
| 1 Tommy Searle | (Molson Kawasaki) | 30+30=60 |
| 2 Gareth Swanepoel | (Molson Kawasaki) | 27+27=54 |
| 3 Billy MacKenzie | (Bike-it Dixon Yamaha) | 23+25=48 |
| 4 Carl Nunn | (EA KTM) | 25+21=46 |
| 5 Jason Dougan | (EA KTM) | 21+19=40 |
| 6 Brad Anderson | (Pioneer Yamaha) | 15+23=38 |
| 7 Wayne Smith | (PAR Honda) | 17+11=28 |
| 8 Shaun Simpson | (Wulfsport Honda) | 11+15=26 |
| 9 Martin Barr | (Bike-it Dixon Yamaha) | 7+17=24 |
| 10 David Willet | (Honda) | 10+13=23 |

Series standings

MX1

1 De Dycker 337 points, 2 Noble 292, 3 Crockard 229, 4 Jones 219, 5 Bradshaw 181, 6 Coppins 177, 7 Sword 158, 8 Bill 127, 9 Eastwood 115, 10 Barr 115

MX2

1 Searle 315 points, 2 Nunn 306, 3 MacKenzie 286, 4 Anderson 238, 5 Swanepoel 220, 6 Smith 208, 7 Dougan 162, 8 Simpson 153, 9 Probert 115, 10 Kohut 113



was following the lines and the Kawasakis of Searle and Swanepoel who were on another level. It got a bit better in the second and I felt a more in tune with the track but the overall result certainly wasn't much to write home about. I must get out of this little slump to take the best results I can in the races we have left."





RECORD BREAKER!

Everts makes it 19 straight moto wins as he heads to his 10th world title, Pourcel the Younger loses ground at the front of MX2 and Nunny snares himself a pair of podiums after GPs in South Africa and Czecho

Words and photos by Alex Hodgkinson

CHRISTOPHE POURCEL keeps losing and still wins while Stefan Everts just carries on winning and winning and winning!

The maximum GP scorelines at Sun City and Loket make it 19 straight moto wins for the nine-time champ, breaking his '03 two-class record from the single moto days. And 11 out of 11 overalls this year means the man is on a 13-streak since Lierop '05 and could end up hitting 17 by the time he retires after Ernee next month.

But first things first and title number 10 at Namur – two days after DBR goes to the printers – seems a formality as the win machine rolls on. Stefan needs someone to ride shotgun and beat Kevin Strijbos to set it all up for the

Citadel – team-mate Cedric 'fast for 25 minutes' Melotte is little help but Kevin is erratic.

In SA he goes down both races while tracking Stefan and a Spanish sandwich of Vico and Barragan duff him up one more time for good measure. Then in Czecho, where he won last year, he's already struggling with a broken return spring on the clutch lever before an argument with Ken De Dycker – lovingly referred to post-race by the Suzuki rider as 'a prick' – costs him more ground. Would Kevin have held off Stefan in race two if he hadn't gone through a berm? What do you think?

Anyway, Steffie leads by 149 heading for Namur and has to leave Sunday evening 150 in front to be secure before Ireland. Having only

ever lost two motos – and never an overall – around the grounds of the ancient fortress the odds are slightly stacked against a showdown at Desertmartin.

Strangely few of the victories have been runaways. Perhaps it's because Stefan has the confidence to follow Jeff Smith's '60s pearl of wisdom – "a win is a win, whether it's by half-a-lap or half-a-wheel" – and even holeshots and fastest laps have not been enough for Josh Coppins to be with Everts at the end of 40 minutes, although they've been enough to ensure four podiums from four GPs.

An inflamed and painful knee courtesy of Manuel Priem wrecks James Noble's SA trip but a combination of Vico's non-arrival due to

Philippaerts heads Champ
team-mate De Reuver in
South Africa



an Iberian Air strike and a dislocated shoulder for Jools Bill moves Nobby to within 11 points of top 10 after Czecho. But his real target to retain his '05 plate is Priem – 28 points ahead – because Coppins is coming up like a train and may have passed them all after Namur.

Roger Magee gets a flight to SA for the Crock Star after he passes Josh in Sweden but perhaps he should have made the return ticket dependant on results too – 16 points in a GP with only 17 real competitors (the locals were slooooooowooo!) was not why Gordy went there.

And his first moto at Loket, after getting filled in with no tear-offs left, is hardly better but an advancing seventh in moto two is much more

like what's expected from the Wulfsport Honda team-leader.

The Brits in MX2 are engaged in a furious struggle for sixth in the points and with two podiums Nunny takes command. "We changed some things on the bike before SA and I finally got the starts. My confidence is up now, it's just a pity it didn't come earlier in the year."

Tommy Searle and Swanny are top 10 every moto and TC and Jason Dougan follow up SA points with hauls in Czecho but Billy Whizz is having a nightmare at Sun City. "I'm glad you could see how hard I was trying. It was bogging out of every turn – if you reckon that was costing me a tenth-of-a-second each time that's two seconds a lap."

The problems continues in Czecho – a difficult track for all with jetting because of the difference in altitude – but Steve and the boys get it sorted for race two and Billy heads off Searle for sixth.

In MX2 you never quite know what to expect next, except that Georges Jobe – the fiery Belgian who's breezed into the GP paddock like a breath of fresh air – will probably be involved!

David Philippaerts' hat-trick under Georges' direction has brought the artisan Italian to within 46 points of pace-setter Christophe Pourcel after Sweden and, when David barges his way back past Tyla Ratray for the first moto win at Sun City, the gap shrinks to 32 and the French kid is looking decidedly wobbly.

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Coppins leads Ramon and Everts early doors in Sun City



MX2 blast off in Czecho



Nunny picks up a pair of podiums

Styla's in a rage at his KTM colleague's use of brake-checking and block passes and there's a stand-up slugging match in the paddock with Jobe. Even reserved souls in the paddock are amused by Tyla's outburst. "He'll get worse than that every lap on the training track in America," is a typical response.

While it's happening Mattighofen is speaking to Kees Van der Ven on his cellphone, telling him the Champ riders have to move aside for their title candidate Philippaerts from race two on.

The Dutchman wisely withholds the order from the irate South African until the evening and Philippaerts' DNF – ironically while trying to oust Tyla but without contact from either side – changes the complexion of the series once again.

A fortnight later in Czecho Tyla still flies into a rage when asked if the directive has been rescinded. His sanitised response? "I'm not moving over for anyone!" And at Loket he storms to the moto win with a verve lacking all year before a major get-off in race two finally ends even his slender hopes of the '06 FIM diploma.

That DNF in SA puts Philippaerts back to 50 down but he refuses to roll over and play dead. "I just have to win the last five GPs now!" he barks.

Meanwhile, buddy Tony Cairoli is the man to take up the challenge. Finally staying on two wheels again for two motos in a day, it's the defending champion who takes his first GP win of the year in SA and moves to within 32 points of Pourcel.

Despite failing to win a GP since the first weekend of May, this is the first time the French kid has failed to extend his series advantage. Both Pourcel's have off days in SA and, retrospectively, the cause seems clear.

Falls when he loses the front end cost Christophe points and Sebastien's suffering with arm-pump from gripping too hard. The tyre companies cannot take a full selection of compounds and treads overseas and Sun City is a shock when they arrive with new dirt having made the track tacky, not slick. The Pourcel boys are the only contenders on Bridgestone and it would appear that the Japanese hard-pack tyres struggle more than their rivals on the unexpected surface – a problem that probably also costs Gordy.

Pourcel silences doubters in quali at

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Tony Cairoli
MX2 World Championship

RESULTS - ROUND 10

MX1

| | | | |
|----|-------------------|------------------------|----------|
| 1 | Stefan Everts | (Rinaldi Yamaha) | 25+25=50 |
| 2 | Josh Coppins | (CAS Honda) | 22+22=44 |
| 3 | Steve Ramon | (Team Suzuki) | 20+20=40 |
| 4 | Tanel Leok | (Motorex Kawasaki) | 18+18=36 |
| 5 | Ken De Dycker | (CAS Honda) | 16+14=30 |
| 6 | Kevin Stribos | (Team Suzuki) | 12+16=28 |
| 7 | Pascal Leuret | (Multitek Honda) | 14+13=27 |
| 8 | Jonathan Barragan | (Red Bull KTM) | 8+15=23 |
| 9 | Antti Pyrhonen | (TM) | 10+12=22 |
| 10 | Julien Bill | (Bike-It/Dixon Yamaha) | 11+11=22 |
| 13 | Gordon Crockard | (Wulfsport Honda) | 6+10=16 |
| 19 | James Noble | (RWJ Honda) | 0+6=6 |

MX2

| | | | |
|----|--------------------|------------------------|----------|
| 1 | Antonio Cairoli | (De Carli Yamaha) | 20+25=45 |
| 2 | Tyla Rattray | (Champ KTM) | 22+22=44 |
| 3 | Carl Nunn | (Champ KTM) | 16+20=36 |
| 4 | Christophe Pourcel | (GPKR Kawasaki) | 11+18=29 |
| 5 | Gareth Swanepoel | (Molson Kawasaki) | 18+11=29 |
| 6 | Tommy Searle | (Molson Kawasaki) | 15+13=28 |
| 7 | Sebastien Pourcel | (GPKR Kawasaki) | 13+14=27 |
| 8 | Manuel Monni | (KTM) | 10+16=26 |
| 9 | David Guarneri | (Ricci Yamaha) | 14+12=26 |
| 10 | David Philippaerts | (Champ KTM) | 25+0=25 |
| 13 | Tom Church | (Molson Kawasaki) | 8+8=16 |
| 14 | Billy MacKenzie | (Bike-It/Dixon Yamaha) | 5+10=15 |
| 15 | Jason Dougan | (Moggstar KTM) | 7+7=14 |

RESULTS - ROUND 11

MX1

| | | | |
|----|-------------------|--------------------|----------|
| 1 | Stefan Everts | (Rinaldi Yamaha) | 25+25=50 |
| 2 | Josh Coppins | (CAS Honda) | 22+20=42 |
| 3 | Jonathan Barragan | (Red Bull KTM) | 20+18=38 |
| 4 | Kevin Stribos | (Team Suzuki) | 15+22=37 |
| 5 | Steve Ramon | (Team Suzuki) | 18+16=34 |
| 6 | Ken De Dycker | (CAS Honda) | 16+15=31 |
| 7 | Tanel Leok | (Motorex Kawasaki) | 13+12=25 |
| 8 | James Noble | (RWJ Honda) | 14+9=23 |
| 9 | Manuel Priem | (Van Beers Yamaha) | 10+11=21 |
| 10 | Wyatt Avis | (KTM) | 11+10=21 |
| 13 | Gordon Crockard | (Wulfsport Honda) | 1+14=15 |

MX2

| | | | |
|----|--------------------|------------------------|----------|
| 1 | David Philippaerts | (Champ KTM) | 22+20=42 |
| 2 | Christophe Pourcel | (GPKR Kawasaki) | 15+22=37 |
| 3 | Carl Nunn | (Champ KTM) | 20+16=36 |
| 4 | Antonio Cairoli | (De Carli Yamaha) | 10+25=35 |
| 5 | Marc De Reuver | (Champ KTM) | 12+18=30 |
| 6 | Tommy Searle | (Molson Kawasaki) | 16+14=30 |
| 7 | Gareth Swanepoel | (Molson Kawasaki) | 14+12=26 |
| 8 | Alessio Chiodi | (Ricci Yamaha) | 18+8=26 |
| 9 | Tyla Rattray | (Champ KTM) | 25+0=25 |
| 10 | Patrick Caps | (Honda) | 13+9=22 |
| 11 | Billy MacKenzie | (Bike-It/Dixon Yamaha) | 3+15=18 |
| 17 | Tom Church | (Molson Kawasaki) | 6+1=7 |
| 21 | Jason Dougan | (Moggstar KTM) | 4+0=4 |

SERIES STANDINGS

MX1

1 Everts 542 points, 2 Stribos 393, 3 Ramon 368, 4 Leok 355, 5 De Dycker 353, 6 Barragan 273, 7 Leuret 202, 8 Melotte 190, 9 Priem 189, 10 Vico 172, 11 Bill 167, 12 Noble 161, 13 Coppins 158...17 Crockard 117...23 Sword 40...34 Hucklebridge 15, 35 Jones 13, 36 Bradshaw 13

MX2

1 C Pourcel 416 points, 2 Cairoli 382, 3 Philippaerts 371, 4 Rattray 330, 5 De Reuver 314, 6 Nunn 277, 7 Searle 254, 8 MacKenzie 246, 9 Swanepoel 236, 10 S Pourcel 225...25 Dougan 36, 26 Church 33...31 Simpson 11...39 Anderson 5...47 Rowson 3



Loket with a runaway win and he recovers better from a turn one heap than Cairoli in race one. But Philippaerts is back in the game and even upsets Pourcel with a block pass. Like Rattray, he won't know what's hit him when he gets to the US.

David is not as fast as Chris this week but he wins the GP and pulls five back while Tony loses two on the day despite hauling in Pourcel for a moto two win.

So it's four to go and all to play for but Philippaerts heads for Namur not knowing if he will have Jobe at his side for the last four GPs. Georges has already been suspended for three races back in the spring and he knows the authorities are after his blood again in SA.

"Take a photo of me with my hands in my pockets. They've got nothing better to do than to have two Youthstream guys following me around all day," Georges jokes before the second motos. The next day he's not laughing. "The Jury have suspended me again for the rest of the year. They say I was signalling David when I waved my arm in encouragement and they accused me of being in an unauthorised area. Greg Atkins gave

evidence I was in the control tower – I was invited there with Wayne Lumgair to be interviewed over the PA system!"

Georges refuses to give up his pass but it is confiscated at the entrance in Czecho. In the meantime, all of the teams have been mailed that no team members are allowed anywhere except the paddock, pit lane and the spectator areas.

Black shirts are checking passes all over the place and 15 passes are impounded for such heinous crimes as failure to have a photo or because they were issued to a different member of the same team. Jan De Groot has been told they have staff out with cameras to take photos of anyone not behind the fence as evidence before the Jury.

Jobe spends the weekend directing KTM factory operations from the spectator slopes – tearing about like a blue-arsed fly – and he's at the exit from the track to greet Philippaerts seconds after he has won again. He's not allowed to go on the podium though.

"The FIM suspension means I am banned. I saw Srb with his arms folded and a grin on his face."

Tommy Searle's involved in a British three-way fight for sixth in the series



Left: Jobe high-fives Philippaerts after his Czecho win

wec

Knighter fires his Katoom away from a Canadian lake as he continues his domination of the '06 WEC series



Series standings

Enduro 1

1 Ivan Cervantes 288 points, 2 Simone Albergoni 254, 3 Alessandro Belometti 212, 4 Bartosz Oblucki 208, 5 Maurizio Micheluz 195, 6 Petri Pohjamo 134, 7 Mike Hartmann 111, 8 Helder Rodrigues 97, 9 Nicolas Deparrois 75, 10 Fred Blanc 74

Enduro 2

1 Samuli Aro 275 points, 2 Mika Ahola 247, 3 Stefan Merriman 231, 4 Johnny Aubert 230, 5 Fabien Planet 171, 6 Xavier Galindo 164, 7 Cristobal Guerero 164, 8 Valtteri Salonen 109, 9 Fabrizio Dini 109, 10 Nicolas Paganon 107...12 Euan McConnell 77, 13 Paul Edmondson 74

Enduro 3

1 David Knight 300 points, 2 Seb Guillaume 233, 3 Bjorne Carlsson 220, 4 Marko Tarkkala 216, 5 Marcus Kehr 177, 6 Vita Kuklik 154, 7 Alessio Paoli 152, 8 Paolo Bernardi 147, 9 Alessandro Zanni 131, 10 Daniel Persson 130

Enduro Junior

1 Joakim Ljunggren 257 points, 2 Jacob Stapleton 242, 3 Marc Bourgeois 207, 4 Oriol Mena 185, 5 Michal Szuster 148, 6 Ricard Wressel 97, 7 Jakub Horak 95, 8 Yannick Bossi 84, 9 Robert Kapajcik 82, 10 Sylvain Lebrun 80... 14 Simon Wakely 47

YANKEE DODDLE!

The WEC visits North America for the first time in the series' history where Knighter extends his unbeaten run

Words and photos by Jonty Edmunds

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"I CAN wrap-up my world championship in Slovakia now," comments David Knight shortly after impounding his bike at the end of the GP of USA, round six of the eight-event '06 WEC series. And having dominated both the Canadian and US rounds of this year's world championship there's little now stopping the burly Manxman from collecting his second world title.

With the WEC visiting North America for the first time ever the number of Canadian and US racers that turn out for the two events is low. Despite the best efforts of both organising clubs home interest in the events isn't what was hoped for and it's WEC regulars that dominate with Knighter claiming the lion's share of the limelight.

In Canada the world championship series seems to have landed in Scandinavia as thousands of small lakes, numerous rocky outcrops and in places sandy conditions give the event a decidedly Finnish feel. Suiiting KTM's reigning Enduro 2 world champion Samuli Aro, the Finn goes on to top the E2 class on both days while Knighter does the double in E3 with Ivan Cervantes and Simone Albergoni sharing honours in E1.



Euan McConnell fails to shine in North America

With Cervantes and Albergoni claiming a day win each in Canada in the E1 class it's Spaniard Cervantes who strikes first, placing 10 seconds ahead of his number one series rival before Albergoni hits the top on day two, finishing close to 40 seconds in front.

Third on both days aboard his 125cc Husqvarna is Bartosz Oblucki. Getting the better of Alessandro Belometti by next to nothing on both days, the pair are two of just half-a-dozen Euro riders in the E1 class in Canada.

Expecting the same two riders – Cervantes and Albergoni – to battle it out for the class win in New York State the week after the Canadian event, an unexpected turn in the weather brings with it a new name to the top of the E1 podium – that of Oblucki.

Maximising the advantage of a high-revving 125cc two-stroke, Bart collects his first ever WEC win by placing nine seconds up on Cervantes. It's also Husqvarna's first WEC win in three years and gives his CH Racing team plenty to smile about. Albergoni places third.

On day two Oblucki sees a simple mistake on the extreme test end his chance of a double win. Then going on to fall heavily on the enduro test he places a disappointed fifth while

Cervantes shows his class by topping the day after spending much of it frantically trying to catch Albergoni. Claiming his only podium finish of the North American rounds, Italian Belometti finishes in third.

"Both races have been good for me," acknowledges E1 championship leader Cervantes. "In Canada I felt really good on day one but Albergoni was really fast on day two. In New York I was pleased with the way I rode. Finishing second in the mud on day one was a good result for my championship and winning on day two was great because I came from second to win. Things are looking good for me now but still anything can happen in the championship."

In the Enduro 2 class it's all about the Finnish riders at rounds five and six as Samuli Aro claims three very important day wins while Mika Ahola takes his first WEC victory since '03 when he raced for VOR. The two events also prove to be disastrous for former world champion Stefan Merriman.

Striking twice in Canada to top the E2 class on both days, Aro places comfortably ahead of Yamaha team-mates Merriman and Johnny Aubert on day one before getting the better of



The Canadian tests impress the WEC men

Ahola and Aubert on day two. Clearly enjoying competing in the near Scandinavian conditions and with his confidence high, Aro claims two seemingly simple class wins.

At the GP of USA it's Aro who again tops the E2 class on day one to show that the reigning class champion is in no mood to give up his world title. But the factory KTM rider doesn't have things all his own way as he only places three seconds ahead of Honda-mounted Ahola after a day-long battle. With one big crash enough to allow Ahola to close in on Aro the pair finish ahead of Aubert in third with Merriman a distant 10th having struggled to perform in the slippery conditions.

On day two Aro just can't find his speed from day one while Ahola certainly finds his. Winning four of the day's tests he tops the class and in doing so ends his win drought. With Aro second Frenchman Aubert again shows his consistency and places third.

"Canada was great and the race in New York was pretty good for me as well," reckons Aro. "I wasn't feeling 100 per cent on day two in New York and Mika was really riding well. I enjoyed the race in Canada the most – in many ways it was like riding at home and the tests were really challenging. I have a nervous month

now before the championship gets to Slovakia."

The only Brit competing in the E2 class in North America, Euan McConnell has a frustrating fortnight placing inside the top 10 just once. Stalling his 450cc TM on numerous occasions while against the clock in the special tests, only on the last day in the States does he get a result that he's anywhere near happy with.

"Crashes and stalling the bike is all I seem to do," reckons Euan. "I'm fed up of finishing outside of the top 10 so on day two in the US I didn't push quite so hard and made sure I didn't make so many mistakes which seemed to work."

But the star of the show in North America is without a doubt Knighter. Unbeaten in class on any special test during either event the reigning E3 world champion takes it all in his stride and finishes as the fastest overall rider in three of the four days of competition.

A whopping three-and-a-half minutes ahead on day one in Canada before stretching his winning margin to an almost unbelievable five minutes on day two, DK gives his class rivals an equally demoralising spanking in New York to pull almost 70 points clear at the top of the

Enduro 3 championship.

"This year continues to go perfectly for me," admits Knighter. "I wanted to continue my good results here so that I could wrap-up the E3 world title in Slovakia which looks a real possibility now. Both events have been fun, especially the Canadian event – I reckon it's the best enduro I've ridden in for years."

With Knighter unbeaten his KTM team-mate Marko Tarkkala places as runner-up on both days in Canada with Gas Gas-mounted Frenchman Seb Guillaume third on both days. In New York Guillaume gets the better of Tarkkala as the Frenchman claims second twice to strengthen his runner-up spot in the E3 championship.

In the Enduro Junior category French rider Marc Bourgeois on his 125cc Husqvarna and Swede Joakim Ljunggren on his 450cc Husaberg claim two day wins each, finishing first and second to each other during the two events. In Canada Bourgeois tops day one ahead of Ljunggren before the pair swap places on day two as TM rider Jake Stapleton finishes in third on both days.

In the States Ljunggren wins first before Bourgeois tops day two with Stapleton again third both times out.

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DOUBLEIRISH

RAY HITS THE ROAD AS THE BYMX CIRCUS PITCHES CAMP AT BALLYKELLY AND DESERTMARTIN

I've been on a few road trips in my time but this one to Ireland has to have been the most incident packed yet – broken bones, food poisoning, crashes, crazy campsite antics, BB gun chaos and that's just for starters.

I had 10 hard days of motocross action to look forward to as I headed to Ireland for two consecutive rounds of the BYMX championship, one in Ballykelly and the other at Desertmartin.

It's the first time the series has run two rounds on the Emerald Isle so it was going to be interesting how many set out on the same journey as me and my unlucky hosts for the trip – the Lloyd family – who kindly watered and pampered me for the whole time!

There are several ports you can leave the UK from to sail to Ireland and this time we headed to Pembrokehire for the Fishguard to Rosslare crossing. So three hours drive from Bristol, three hours on the ferry and five hours to Ballykelly once we landed on dry land. All-in-all a long but pleasant trip and to be honest it's a far better route than the dreaded Stranraer drive.

We did get lost en route to our first destination of Ballykelly for a short while as the sat-nav we were using was set for a motorcycle route rather than a 10-ton truck and sent us up the steepest scenic routes in Ireland – lovely for a bike ride but not a truck.

The last time I was at Ballykelly was for the 2004 GP as me and the Suttmeister built the minibike track for the evening's entertainment. Unfortunately, on my arrival I noticed it was no more – just a tiny outline of that wonderful rainy night of yesteryear. I nearly shed a tear! But the circuit was looking cool and ready for some top BYMX action.

To my surprise nearly all the registered riders were racing both weekends and most were staying for the whole 10 days which made it extra special as everyone wanted to make their own trip worthwhile.

Ballykelly was a lot different compared to Desertmartin as you had to provide your own entertainment because they didn't have a disco for the Friday night and as soon as the racing finished on the Saturday everyone was left to fend for themselves to find a campsite to stay at as Desertmartin was closed until Monday.

Anyway, the racing was great although quite a few riders suffered with injuries. But these lads came away unscathed and as class winners – Ashley Greedy, Lewis King, Daniel Arnold, Jack Rowe and Jack Kelly.

After we left Ballykelly we headed to a huge campsite called Golden Sands at Benone, nothing fantastic but they did manage to cater for large MX trucks and their families. Some of the looks we were getting driving through the site to our pitches were classic – it was like the circus had come to town!

The break between each event gave the nippers time to relax and relax they did – not all in a positive manner and I would imagine the site will no longer entertain the motocross fraternity ever again as some let themselves down and certainly didn't do any favours for MX public relations.

Anyway it was nice to sit and chat about cool stuff like sharks and sandy egg sandwiches so a good time was had by most.

We escaped from Golden Sands early on Monday morning and headed straight to Cookstown and Desertmartin. Most stopped for a top-up of shopping and in my case a top-up of suntan lotion for my bald napper.

Once there we were parked up by the club official and again the track was in mint condition for the club's annual mid-week two-day race.

For me the two days are not needed and it proved once again I was right as far too many riders were injured on such a demanding track which put paid to their own BYMX championship assault – lots were in tears and lots took the early ferry home.

On the Thursday a coach trip to Portrush was organised for the day so most headed there for some BB gun action (sorry, I meant sandcastle building). I stayed back at the track and had a quiet day shuffling about and cleaning my camera – so basically I was bored!

Come race day on the Friday the weather took a turn for the worse and so did my health. For some reason I become very ill and spent most of the day doubled up in bed and trying to not to reach for the loo roll – we tried to narrow it down to what I ate but there was so much to remember that plan soon went out the window!

I did manage to drag myself to the track throughout the day but had to hang onto the fence as I felt dizzy and when it all finished I slept until 8am the following day. I awoke reasonably well but still feeling weak and, guess what, the weather hit rock bottom with yet more rain. The club decided to wait until 11am to see if the weather improved and it did sufficiently to finish two more blocks.

Race wins were up for grabs as the track was very wet with really deep ruts which made for lots of mistakes but the riders seemed to enjoy it and the top riders at Desertmartin were Jack Kelly, Connor Walkley, Scot James, Drew Goudy and Ashley Greedy so well done everyone for putting on a show in such dreadful conditions.

I would also like to say a special thanks to the following people who looked after me for the time spent in Ireland – the Lloyds, Stevie Mills, the ice cream man, Andrex and the wonderful hospitality of all at both clubs and events.

Cheers guys – see you next year...

Steven Clarke yanks the holey at a wet n' wild Desertmartin





*Nine months later
they were the proud
parents of a litter
of minibikes!*



*You've just gotta
love the British
summertime!*

*Tom Watts gets on the
gas ahead of Jack
Hawes at Ballykelly*



SERIES STANDINGS

PREMIER

1 Ashley Greedy 952 points, 2 Kristian Whatley 929, 3 Steven Clarke 919, 4 Alex Rockwell 793, 5 James Lassu 731

INTERMEDIATE

1 Lewis King 955 points, 2 Luke Remmer 899, 3 Aaron Smith 837, 4 Tom Watts 801, 5 Josh Waterman 722

BW85cc

1 Daniel Arnold 927 points, 2 Scot James 836, 3 Lewis Tombs 737, 4 Lewis Abbott 733, 5 James Hutchinson 731

SW85cc

1 Jack Rowe 912 points, 2 Connor Walkley 903, 3 Luke Hawkins 836, 4 Jamie McCanney 824, 5 Christian Taylor 795

JUNIOR 65cc

1 Jack Kelly 959 points, 2 Adam Sterry 910, 3 Liam Garland 796, 4 Ben Howell 742, 5 Callan Cooper 693

MYBESTTRACE

This month's My Best Race comes from Team Green's Josh Waterman. Josh is currently leading the BSMA championship and placed within the top seven in the BYMX series too so it's been a good 2006 season so far for the Coleford-based teenager. Take it away Josh...

"My best race was at Polesworth at the first BYMX round back in 2004. It was in the very first race of the weekend and back then I was riding my small-wheeled Team Green 85cc machine. I felt confident before the race but got a bit excited on the start and hit the gate, I started dead last but by the end of the first lap I pulled back through to 10th.

"I was flying and by the final lap I was on the back wheel of leader Scott Elderfield. We battled for a few laps but he kept me at bay until the chequered flag. Afterwards he told me his back brake had gone. It was definitely a race I remember and hopefully I can have a few more like that this year."



WRWS!

WHAT ROCKS, WHAT SUCKS...

In the past month we have seen the best of youth motocross and possibly the worst.

This month's WRWS is dominated by what sucks in our sport so hold on to your hats and let's take a behind the scenes look at youth motocross.

How many riders would love the chance to practice on the track they're going to race on before a big national event? I would imagine the vast majority would! For some unexplained reason a handful of riders allegedly had that chance before the Brookthorpe BSMA round. Is this fair? Is this against the rules? Please let me know what you think...

Big-bore kits appear to be making a comeback with 105cc kits seeming to be the most popular at the moment. There are companies out there willing to convert your 85cc into a mini beast – don't do it kids as it's cheating and cheats never prosper!

Injuries this month have been rife and the Brookthorpe and Ballykelly nationals have seen many broken bones and nasty niggles. Why?

Whether you're a parent, rider or MX journalist one thing we probably all have in common is passion for our sport – and that rocks!

Waking up on a drizzly damp day to go racing MX is not fun and the same can be said for dusty baking hot days in mid July. Travelling all over the UK or Europe sat in a Sprinter van certainly isn't fun but we all do it because we love the sport and anyone who says they wouldn't miss it I reckon are telling porkies.

Desertmartin rocks and that's official from all the nippers who raced at the recent BYMX national! The facilities have improved since last year and the track was in perfect order.

Let's try and do the same at every venue throughout the UK – it's all about effort and the folk at Cookstown showed plenty of that.

More WRWS next month...

RAY'S RIBTICKLER!

There have been sightings in garages, supermarkets, pop festivals and even on the moon but Elvis has finally been found in Scotland at the BYMX championship in Leuchars – thank you very much!



JAKE PAGE

AGE: 13
BIKE: SW85 KTM
YEARS RACING: 7
KIT: SPIRIT
NUMBER OF TROPHIES: 200
TITLES: 3
BROKEN BONES: 3
TRUCK/VAN: FORD RIMOR

LEWIS LLOYD

AGE: 11
BIKE: SW85 SUZUKI
YEARS RACING: 3
KIT: FOX AND 661
NUMBER OF TROPHIES: 58
TITLES: 0
BROKEN BONES: 1
TRUCK/VAN: MERCEDES ATIGO

COMMENT BSMABROADCAST

I bet some of you can remember your first caravan holiday – rain, table tennis (must have been a big caravan Ray – SL) and soggy chips are my fondest memories.

Well I'm repeating the experience writing my column from a very quiet campsite in Ireland, sat in a race truck with the rain beating on the roof so loudly I can't think what I want for tea – and some of you say I have a glamorous lifestyle!

Congratulations must go to Ben Watson for qualifying for Loretta Lynn's in the USA, possibly the largest gathering of motocross riders on the planet. After two qualifying rounds Ben managed to squeeze into the elite event on a borrowed 65cc bike. Ben will be the only British representative there so well done Ben and good luck.

At the recent BSMA event at Brookthorpe the Severn club held its annual bout of Queensbury Rules handbags championship. Firstly two riders in the AMX class slapped each other with silky gloves which actually happened on the race track and then two riders decided to hug each other in a very strange manner off the track in the pits – don't do it lads, it isn't big and it certainly isn't clever!

Until next time safe riding...



Got any youth news for Rage?
Give Ray Chuss a bell on 07773 609994 or
email him at dbryoutheditor@raychuss.com

HEARTWARMER! LUKE'S AMAZING COMEBACK TALE

It's every parent's worst nightmare when their child becomes ill or suffers an injury. But imagine how it feels when you see your child have a huge off in a motocross race and suffer a serious injury – I can't!

Well Emma and Sean Newman did when their son Luke crashed which resulted in him suffering from loss of use of his right arm. Weeks went by and the NHS doctors were still saying that feeling and use of the arm would return. After one final trip to see the doctor the nightmare got worse and Luke was advised to learn to write with his left hand – this was the final straw and Luke's racing career was over.

The family still visited their local club races and on one amazing day they were approached by a lady in the crowd who asked what the problem was with Luke's arm.

Emma explained what happened and the lady explained her son had a similar problem and advised her to visit a specialist nerve doctor at the Royal National Orthopaedic Hospital in Stanmore. After one consultation Luke's arm started to regain movement and six months later Luke's recovered and back racing.

"Everyone should keep trying, never ever give up and if it wasn't for our weekly visit to our local club event we would never have known that the surgeon at Stanmore existed," says a smiling Emma.

Luke's injury is being used as a case study for similar injuries – it's got to be one of the most remarkable MX stories of the year.

THE SHAPE OF THINGS TO COME...

The BSMA are certainly looking to move the sport forward and I recently spoke with Tracey Wratten and chairman John Hall on where they see the sport going. The upshot of our conversation was the following statement.

"We all ask ourselves where is our sport going, we at the BSMA have been trying hard to move forward but it seems others are happy to keep their heads in the sand – here are just a few things we have done so far for the good of our sport.

"Firstly we were the only association willing to take on the noise issue and brought in the 96db limit a year before anyone else. Everyone talked about it but no-one had the bottle to enforce it. Our aim is to bring this level down to 94db as there is still a noise problem out there and it needs to be addressed – it's not going to go away so let's sort the problem out.

"We then decided to take on Foxhill in order to restore it back to its former glory and slowly but surely it's getting there and the feedback from the riders is all good.

"We have spoken to the ACU on several things, the latest being a full-on British schoolboy championship for 2007. The idea put forward by the BSMA was that we both start

with our own series – eight rounds each.

The first four rounds run by each would be qualifying rounds after which the top 20 from each would move onto a real British championship, the ACU running four rounds and BSMA the other four.

"This would not only give us a real championship, it could open the doors to bigger and better things. But sadly this was turned down by the ACU. I also read in a recent issue of TMX that they are boasting a riding school with the help of a local council.

"The BSMA have been involved in this very thing with Wellington and Bedford councils for 12 months but for some reason we do not seem to attract the press coverage that others get. It's time we blew our own trumpet.

"Some of our clubs have been running an adult Open class in order to give adults the chance to ride with the BSMA. Next year we will be working hard on starting up an adult section and hopefully bring in adult clubs. This will help release some of the pressure on some clubs that are having to turn riders away. So if there are any clubs looking for a new home next year be they schoolboy or adult clubs then either contact Tracy in the office or John Hall the chairman."

So there you have it, a behind the scenes look at the BSMA...



BRITISH LIONS!

Big congratulations must go to Alexz Wigg and Sam Haslam for finishing first and second in the Youth class at the FIM World Trials Championship at Hawkstone recently.

Both riders ride for Gas Gas with Alexz just

doing enough to finish top by only seven marks ahead of Sam. Alexz is now in third place in the world championship standings with only two rounds to go – and with a rider's two worst scores to be dropped he's in a great position to take the title. So come on Alexz!

COME ON BILLY...

...LIGHT MY FIRE! MAC'S FAILING TO SET THE TRACK ABLAZE - AND BOY DOES HE KNOW IT...



THE FIRST thing people talk about when they haven't got anything to talk about is...the weather! So hasn't the weather been brilliant these days! Woo hoo! Sun in Britain and not just any old sun, some of the hottest days in 100 years! Absolutely awesome! Late nights riding and playing football has been the choice of the household this month.

I'll take ya through my busiest week this month as that's about as exciting as my life has got at the moment. After a week's holiday in South Africa with my girlfriend before the race I had a horrible weekend racing and came home with my work head on! With the amount of races we've been having I didn't think a week's holiday would be too much to ask, not that it was exactly a holiday - I still went for my runs and I was on the phone most of it to possible future teams! My phone bill was near £800!

The rest was spent totally relaxing, eating some nice food, sun bathing and in the casino! Sun City is an awesome place, I've been there twice before but I was a little bored this time doing nothing! Still, a week in Sun City is better than a week most places!

Like I said, the race went terrible and I had real problems with my bike - the first time in a long time the bike felt underpowered. This problem lay with the jetting as being so high above sea level it was very difficult to get the right setting. In the end we went the wrong way and the bike was too rich - *yawn* you know the story, riders making excuses about the bike! *lol*

So the day I got back we arrived home to a scorching hot day in Southampton. Straight away I was up the local field playing football, then after that I went for a cycle, then later that night we played football again until 10.30! I love summer!

I had to pack quick that night as me and Benny were off to Italy to join up with Rinaldi and get my bike sorted. It was even hotter over there - bordering on 40 degrees - and anything you left in the sun melted or was too hot to pick up! I spent all day hammering out laps round this really rough and stony Italian track. I was enjoying myself though, every little thing we tried kept improving the bike and towards the end of the day I felt really good riding again.

On the Thursday when we got back me, my bro, Barty Marr and Rich all went down the beach and bought a big four-man inflatable dingy! We drove to Hayling Island and spent the day messing around in the sea - it was really nice to have a day with my friends in between all the madness of motocross! All four of us jumped in Barty's 106 and strapped the boat to the top. We looked really funny!

So everything was sorted for Whitby. I felt I'd worked my little white ass off all week before we took the long drive to Whitby. Then I got lost and it took me an extra hour - Martin Barr can't read maps! Seven hours in the end, I was knackered!

The track looked really cool with four whoops sections, lots of tabletops and a big rhythm section! Everyone wanted to get out and play - it's nice having a track you can have fun on in practice, it always sets everyone up for a good race.

My results were pretty stale that weekend though. I didn't quite have the pace for the boys in front - I was in practice mode, not really attacking the track and losing ground. I ended up third overall with a third and a fourth - really not the best result! The Kawasakis were really on it that weekend.

After Whitby it was the first week I have had at home where I could properly get back into my riding and training schedule and it felt really nice not living

out my Fox bag for once! On Tuesday I went for a fitness test because I had Big Bill on the dog and bone grilling my ass cos Tommy had spanked me! He actually talked me into doubting my fitness even though the only time I had off was maybe three days in South Africa!

So off I went to see 'Cruise' - the guy who helps me with my programme - and I got on the bike and reeled off my best ever test! So I was straight on the phone to the old man gloating! And you know what? It just gave him more ammo to slag me because I therefore SHOULD NOT have been beat!

Everyone was home so we trained and rode all week together. Wednesday even brought down Johnny and Ash for a good few motos - or in Ash's case three laps! It was really fun and I got some really good hard motos in. The track we rode was a big sand pit and the temperature was nearing 40 degrees again in the bowl. I was practising my sprints as recently I have been relaxing into the race pace too early. I had Nico on the pitboard and really enjoyed trying to beat my laps. Like I said it was nice to get back into routine for once.



So all was set for Czecho and me and big Andrew Bell drove out there on the Thursday night. It was a nice change from all the flying recently, it actually felt like we were back in the motocross circle swing of things. I hate flying, you always feel like such a celeb. I enjoy driving - back to the MX roots!

It was another up and down weekend and I really hope this s**t stops soon - one bad race followed by one goodish race. First race I went down at the start, then again after going well in the opening laps and then I fell back into race pace with the slower riders. The slower I went the more bumps I saw and the slower I went still. It really sucked, one of my worst races this year. I didn't speak to anyone between races, I just watched Everts make it look easy and came out with a good head on for moto two.

I got another crap start but made it through good on the first few corners. About halfway my back brake started fading and with 10 minutes to go it wasn't there at all so I had to really concentrate on using the gears to slow which in a way worked quite well - I was surprised to hold Tommy off and I wasn't losing much time on Carl.

I hope us British lads can get back on the pace of the front guys - it seems like we are all on our own pace. We've all had podiums this year though so maybe, just maybe, we might all be on it before the end of the year - with me on top of course! Let's hope it's the des Nations, hey?

And I'm guessing you'll all probably find out what team I'm riding for next year in this issue - sorry for keeping you in the dark this long!

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